

James Little

P O E M S

ON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY

JOHN OGILVIE, D.D.

THE THIRD EDITION.

VOLUME II.

ΣΥΝΕΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΧΑΡΙΤΕΣ



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L O N D O N,

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P R O V I D E N C E ;

A N

A L L E G O R I C A L P O E M :

I N T H R E E B O O K S .

— — JUVATQUE PETERE INDE CORONAM,
UNDE PRIUS NULLI VELARINT TEMPORA MUSÆ.

LUCRET.

VOL. II.

B

PROVIDENCE

A

ALLEGORICAL FORM

IN THREE BOOKS

— JUVATORE REVERENDI IN DE LONDON

THE PRINCIPAL NOTICES AND TRADITIONS

THE



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
JAMES STUART MACKENZIE,
LORD PRIVY SEAL FOR SCOTLAND,

THE FOLLOWING

P O E M

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS LORDSHIP'S

MOST HUMBLE AND

MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

J. OGILVIE.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
JAMES STUART MACKENZIE
LORD PRIVY SEAL FOR SCOTLAND

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MOST OBLIGING SERVANT

JOHN GILFILLAN



INTRODUCTION.

AS the author of the following attempt doth not remember to have seen any work regularly executed upon such a plan as he hath laid down; the reader will indulge him in the liberty of making a few introductory observations, which may tend to alleviate, if not to remove those prejudices, which almost every species of novelty is apt at first view to excite.

THE subject of the present Essay falls so naturally under the cognizance of every reflecting mind, that we have no reason to be surprized, when we find it treated in the most copious manner by many writers, both ancient and modern. It is however certain in general, that philosophical dissertations, in whatever degree intrinsically valuable, lose their effect on the bulk of mankind, when they are not enlivened with those graces which contribute to amuse the imagination. It is on this account that we find a moral work, in which the most important truths are accurately investigated, overlooked as uninteresting; when a

INTRODUCTION.

series of incidents, which are calculated to impress upon the mind some beneficial rule of conduct, is perused with satisfaction, and seldom fails to establish a favourable prepossession. So much stronger is the impulse which leads us to search for *Pleasure*, than that which prompts us to desire *Instruction*.

THAT the ancients were fully sensible of the advantages resulting from this species of composition, will be obvious to any person who hath perused the writings of Prodicus and Cebes; or who is acquainted with those beautiful allegories which are intermingled with the philosophy of Plato. These will render conspicuous to every impartial reader, the care which was taken to blend *the agreeable with the useful*, in canvassing such subjects as have Instruction for their *principal* end. The unnatural separation of philosophy and eloquence did not happen till after the death of Socrates; when the disciples of that great man became the leaders of particular sects, each of them retaining a shred, but none preserving the compleat body of the principles of their master. “*Profeminatæ sunt quasi familiæ diffidentes inter se, & multum disjunctæ, & dispares; cum tamen omnes se philosophi Socraticos & dici vellent, & esse arbitrentur.*”

FROM

INTRODUCTION.

FROM these observations on the nature of the human mind, the author of the following work was induced to form a plan for canvassing a subject, perhaps of all others the most interesting; in which, philosophical sentiment might not be wholly separated from entertainment. He is sensible that the difficulty of uniting ends so apparently remote, is augmented in proportion to the abstraction and subtlety of those ideas which are to be distinctly exhibited to the mind. It is a much easier matter to contrive a series of incidents, by whose combination one important moral precept is enforced, than to invent allegories, which tend to illustrate a chain of truths obscured by ignorance, and clogged with objections. This difficulty, however, will induce a candid and sensible critic to overlook a defect in an attempt of this nature, which in another work might be deemed considerable; and to regard the whole, if not as a work of the kind compleatly executed, yet at least as an attempt to introduce a species of composition, which may be found susceptible of the happiest improvements. These inducements may perhaps prevail on the reader to attend to a more particular explanation of the author's *design*.

INTRODUCTION.

THE subject of this work, comprehensive as it is, may not improperly be comprized under the three following heads. When we contemplate the Supreme Being, as the Creator and Governor of the universe, we either consider him as having disposed the *Works of Nature* in their present situation, and as regulating their various revolutions; or we behold him conferring the most extensive benefit on mankind, by favouring them with a *Revelation* of his will; or we see him conducting the complicated detail of *human Life*, to effectuate some great and necessary purpose. In each of these views, however, as some objects will occur, which ought at once to excite our admiration and our gratitude; so others will present themselves, which suggest doubts that require to be ascertained by a connected process of just observation. Thus the Works of Nature, while they display the Omnipotence of the Deity, exhibit such indications of *seeming Evil*, as lead us to challenge, upon a superficial review, His Wisdom and His Justice. We plainly perceive indeed, that the productions of the earth are suited to the necessities of the inhabitants, for whose benefit it appears to have been created. We see it glowing in many places with the most attractive beauty, and crowned almost every where with verdure and variety. We observe the rotation of seasons
regularly

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regularly carried on in uniform and invariable harmony. But when these marks of design induce us to form a favourable conclusion; with regard to the superintendency of Providence; — whirlwinds, storms, volcanos, earthquakes; — whatever, in short, of this kind we have been accustomed to consider as productive of evil, reclaims loudly against this decision, and leads us to call in question, if not to deny truths, which appeared to stand upon the best foundation.

WHEN in the same manner we proceed from contemplating the Works of Nature, to consider the conduct of the Deity, in exhibiting to the world a Revelation of His will; inestimable as the benefit may appear to be, the objections raised against it are plausible enough to represent, as suspicious, circumstances which were originally regarded as beneficial. The principal difficulties which occur in this examination, arise from the *time* at which the doctrines of Revealed Religion were promulgated to mankind, and from its want of universality in all ages. These at least are the points which are most particularly connected with the present subject.

AFTER

INTRODUCTION.

AFTER all, however, the most formidable objections to the belief of a Providence, are drawn from an estimate of its conduct with regard to human Life. The unequal distribution of Reward and Punishment which takes place in this world; the depression of Virtue, and the triumph of successful Villany; are such objects, as recurring frequently to every reflecting mind, give occasion to complaints so apparently well founded, as it is no easy matter to obviate effectually. We are the more tenacious of our opinions on this subject, as the experience of almost every individual suggests particular instances of this unequal distribution, in which either himself or his neighbour is immediately and deeply interested. The general observation that this inequality will be fully compensated in some future state of existence, whatever effect it may produce upon a sensible and considerate mind, yet surely can never produce perfect resignation in a man who considers *present* happiness, or *present* affliction, as the greatest good, or the most insupportable evil. We may tell such persons that their sentiments are unjust, and that their complaint is irrational; but unless they are made to see that some *immediate benefit* may result from their calamity; unless from proofs, supported by the testimony of experience with regard to others, the mind is convinced of the superintendency

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ency of Providence; unless in some of these cases we are apt to take up the complaint of the poet;

— Cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi

Adspicerem; lætosque diu florere nocentes,

Verarique pios:— Rursus labefacta cadebat

Religio — — — CLAUD.

— But when the mind survey'd

The *human scene* involv'd in deep'ning shade;

Saw wrapt in ease, with long enjoyment blest,

The bad rejoicing, and the good depress'd;

Then died Religion.

The circumstance likewise which discovered his mistake, has in this view of the subject the force of a convincing argument:

Abstulit hunc tandem Rufini pœna tumultum,

Absolvitque Deos. ID. IBID.

Thy doom, Rufinus, clear'd the gloomy scene,

And show'd the Gods were just.

FROM

INTRODUCTION.

FROM the supposition that these three topics comprehend the subject, the author was induced to treat them separately; and has therefore assigned a distinct book to each of them.— In the first, the objections to the belief of a Providence, arising from the natural evil which takes place in the world, are stated and obviated, at least in some measure, from the *necessity* there is for its existence in the present state of things; and from the beneficial consequences of which it is obviously productive. The unreasonableness of wishing that this world was a Paradise, or that man had been created with higher powers than he possesseth, is particularly displayed; and the analogical argument from the *scale of Being*, as far as we can observe it, to the probable gradation which subsists in *superior ranks*, is illustrated with some care, and carried to as great length, as the author's sphere of investigation could enable him to proceed.

THE subject of the second book is such, as the reader will perhaps think at first view not susceptible of the beauties of description. As it forms, however, a great and interesting part of the work, it was necessary to consider it as particularly as possible; and this the author hath attempted to do in such a manner, as that the reader may
receive

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receive some entertainment amid the process of regular argumentation. As the nature of the theme made it impossible to continue the series of allegories in this book, which had been begun in the preceding one, it was necessary to have recourse to history for facts, instead of fictions; circumstances; and these which are culled out were cast into their present order, that their combination may impress upon the mind the principal truth which it was proposed to illustrate. If the reader requires a more particular detail, he may consult the note at the beginning of the book. It is proper only to observe further in this place, that as the first scene was so barren of incidents, the author has ventured to introduce in it the only *allegorical personage*, who is permitted to act a considerable part. The personification of the Genius of the Nile in the succeeding scene, and that of Reason in the end of the book, are intended, as the reader of taste will immediately observe, to enliven the description where it was judged expedient; and to render that part of the work in some measure entertaining, where the separate arguments are summed up, and where the conclusion resulting from them is impartially stated.

THE

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THE conduct of Providence with regard to human Life, upon which it was intended to throw some light in the last part of the Poem, affords such numerous and diversified subjects of speculation, that whatever reason the reader, who is dissatisfied with the arguments, may have to impeach, on that account, the judgment of the writer; yet, the defect of entertainment may be *justly* ascribed to sterility of imagination. In canvassing a perplexed and intricate subject, we are not to expect proofs which carry along with them immediate and irresistible conviction. This in every case is extremely difficult, and in the present instances wholly impossible. The compleat vindication of *the ways of God to man*, we must leave to *that day*, in which the secrets of the heart will be laid open, and the Deity's moral government of the world, as it regards the circumstances of individuals, will be justified in the presence of its assembled inhabitants. It is sufficient, with our limited and scanty portion of knowledge, if from considering things as they are at present, we can account for some of the dispensations of Providence, in such a manner as may convince us that the *marks of design* which reflection suggests to us, point to some Being of superior wisdom who is employed to regulate the revolution of events. When this truth is once thoroughly established, the doctrine

INTRODUCTION.

trine of future retribution follows as a consequence.—Thus much the author thought it necessary to observe, with regard to the sentiment in this branch of the subject. The allegorical part is suited to illustrate it, in that manner which he judged to be most apposite and agreeable.

UPON the whole, he will confess that one reason for which he undertook the following work, was, that he might shew his readers, by attempting to unite *philosophical sentiment with the graces of description*, that even this species of poetry may be rendered subservient to higher purposes than is generally supposed; as it may co-operate to promote the great end which it is proposed to accomplish in the researches of science. That the reader will meet with many blemishes in the poem itself, the writer will not at present presume to question; and when they are fairly pointed out, will be ready to acknowledge. He hopes only, that an estimate either of the description or argument, will not be formed from a view of any particular part, but that a decision will be suspended till the whole is perused.

T H E

A R G U M E N T.

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PROVIDENCE.

BOOK I.

THE WORKS OF NATURE.

OF God's eternal ways, the parts display'd
To reason's bounded search; whether unveil'd,
Informing Wisdom treads the roughen'd scenes
Of earth, or radiant in thy bursting noon.
Religion! with superior port she walks,
And towers conspicuous;— or illumines the shade
Of human Life, or rolls the secret wheels
Of Empire:— these the heav'n-aspiring muse
Unfolds, tho' timid; her majestic step
Intent, yet trembling to pursue. Ev'n now,
As o'er some mantling cliff the traveller hangs
Aghast, and meditates the deep below,
Dizzy and tottering! thus th' astonish'd mind

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Eyes

2 P R O V I D E N C E.

Eyes its great theme with dread! rapt to a clime,
Where yet the Muse's wing has never soar'd.

15

O THOU, whose spirit thro' this moulded clay,
First breathed the living soul, and taught its voice,
Young, faint, and unassured, to lisp thy praise
With trembling accents, and th' impassion'd heart
To feel the power of harmony, tho' placed 20
In this bleak scene; far from the happier seats,
Where ancient genius bloom'd! To Thee I call;
Who thro' the vast of nature, space and time,
Dart'st thy keen glance all-piercing; that pervades
The heart of man. O lend thy powerful aid, 25
Propitious! Thee the Muse invokes (of all
Besides regardless) her faint voice to raise;
To brace her fluttering pinions to a flight
Daring, that scales the steep of time; to swell
Her thought, capacious of its mighty plan, 30
That tries to meditate thy wondrous ways.

Now o'er the western skies, descending Eve
Spread her grey robe; the solitary hour,
To silence sacred, and deep musing thought,
Came still and plaintive on the sighing gale, 35

And



P R O V I D E N C E.

3

And stole the ear of Wisdom. All was still,
Save where slow-trilling from the quivering bough
The thrush wild-warbling, to the echoing vale
Pour'd her soft lay, melodious as the voice
Of Harmony, when from his airy cell
Arouz'd, loose Zephir waves his sportive wings;
And breathes it to the soul. The melting strains
Thus soothed my throbbing bosom to a calm.

Led by revolving thought, my wandering steps
Explored the vale of solitude. A rill
Slow-tinkling, murmur'd as I pass'd along,
Its bank gay-robed with Beauty's balmy train.
O'er me the steepy cliffs impending, frown'd
Horrific; from their sides the mouldering earth
Crumbled, and gradual shook the hanging arch,
Whose dark spire quiver'd o'er the void below.
Between their gleaming sides, refulgent flamed
The sun's broad orb. As on I walk'd, the scene
Opened, and from the plain one winding path
(Ragged with stones loud rattling down the height;) 55
Led to the summit of the cliff. I scaled
Th' ascent, and wondering, from its brow beheld
A boundless prospect, shagg'd with rising hills,

Rocks, defarts, woods, dales, landscapes, groves, and spires.
 Far on the left, a bare and barren heath, 60
 (Save where the wild trees form'd a little grove,
 Crown'd with spontaneous herbage) rushing chill'd
 My veins. 'Twas all a solemn scene; retired,
 Like that where ancient Druids lived remote,
 Conversing with the Moon! and airy shapes 65
 (So Fame reports) beneath the wan dim ray,
 Sweep shadowy o'er the blighted lawn, or soar
 High on the streamy flame, or ride the winds;
 Or hear the murmuring wood, when darkness wraps
 Her cloudy curtain round the world, and Fear 70
 Knocks at the heart of Man.—Such is the haunt
 Of Fairy-trains, when silver tips the hills;
 That in the deep grove's shadowy gloom disport;
 Or hear the wild winds whistle, or reposed,
 Lie on the daisy's downy lap, or spring 75
 Light as the glancing beam from flower to flower;
 And suck the powdering of a cowslip's eye,
 And loofely swimming drink the pearly dew.

SLOW o'er the bleak heath roam'd my wandering steps;
 The mind deep musing, and the still retreat 80
 All lonesome; when the keen autumnal breeze

Chill

Chill from the nipping East, and piercing blew;
The spangling dew-drops from its clammy wing
Shook loose, and, sprinkling o'er the purple scene
Their liquid amber, mingled as they fell
A thousand trembling hues.— I mark'd the waste,
Pensive, and inly murmuring, thus began.

“ WHERE are the gales of Eden? Where the balm
“ Delicious, breathed from aromatic bowers
“ Where

^a *Where are the gales of Eden?*] This complaint of the inequality of the seasons (which introduceth, as the reader will observe afterwards, the first Allegory) has alternately been employed by different writers, as a proof that man has degenerated from his primæval state, and as an argument to prove the superintendency of Providence. Considered in the former light, it gave the poets an occasion to invent the fable of the gold, silver, brass, and iron ages of the world, as in each of these the face of external nature was adapted to the character of mankind, and punishments were only inflicted upon them by the Deity, in proportion to their degrees of degeneracy.

— — — — — Τῆς μὲν ἐπιστά

Ζεὺς Κρονίδης ἐκρύψε πόλιν μιν, οὐνεκα τιμᾶς

Οὐκ εἶδεν μακαρεῖσσι θεοῖς οἱ Ὀλύμπου ἔχουσιν.

“ Where Summer smiled perpetual, and the groves 90

“ Sighed to soft Zephyrs, or the melting voice

Says Hesiod, speaking of the second race of mortals. *Oper. & Dier.* l. 136.

Ovid tells us in the same spirit,

— — — Subiit argentea proles

Auro deterior. — — —

Jupiter antiqui contraxit tempora veris,

Perque Hyemes, Æstusque & inæquales Autumnos,

Et breve Ver, spatiis exegit quatuor annum,

Metam. l. 2.

Considered in the second point of view, their uniform and invariable rotation constitutes an argument for the superintendency of Wisdom. This sentiment is elegantly expressed by Claudian;

Sæpe mihi dubiam traxit sententia mentem,

Cuiarent Superi terras, an nullus inesset

Rector — — —

Nam cum dispositi quæsissem fœdera mundi,

Præscriptosque maris fines; *Anniq̃ue meatus, &c.*

— — — Tunc omnia rebar

Consilio firmata Dei. In *Rufin. Lib.*

It ought however to be observed, that the universal testimony of all ages to the original degeneracy of man, as well as of the world, from its first state of perfection, gives a sanction to the Mosaic History of this transaction, and corroborates the evidence by which it is supported.

“ Of

“ Of birds low-humming thro’ the vocal boughs
 “ Mellifluous ! Ah, the smiling scene no more
 “ Breaks on the ravish’d sense, or breaks to steal
 “ A transient visit, sweeping from the fight 95
 “ Like Angels sailing thro’ the midnight gloom,
 “ That melt in air ! Thus blooms th’ Elysian scene,
 “ And dies. Young Spring from Winter’s loosened grasp
 “ Escaped, dejected sees the blooming year
 “ Shrink from her desolating blast, that tears 100
 “ His glittering pinions. Summer darts her eye
 “ Light o’er the laughing mead, and gives her spoils
 “ To Autumn ; scowling thro’ her changeful glance,
 “ Fierce Winter looks, and as she swims away,
 “ Howling in horrid triumph, mounts the winds, 105
 “ And drives her shrieking thro’ the turbid air.

“ W HENCE too these haunts ^b of solitude, these wild
 “ And cheerless desarts ? Whence these sable cliffs,
 “ Shapeless

^b *Whence too these haunts, &c.] Nemo nunquam dixerit terram pulchriorem esse quod cavernosa sit, quod dehiscat in multis locis, quod disrupta caveis & spatiis inanibus ; usque nullo ordine dispositis, nulla forma : Nec quæ aliud contineant quam tenebras & sordes ; unde graves & pestiferæ exhalationes, terræ motus, &c. Theor. Tellur. v. 1. cap. 7. Let it be ob-*

" Shapeless and rude, that shag the horrid face
 " Of earth, and mix the mountain with the skies? 110
 " Are these thy offspring, Wisdom? Did thy hand
 " Furrow the precipice abrupt, or cleave
 " The ragged rock, or pile th' enormous hills
 " To Heav'n, and clothe them with eternal snow;
 " That man might labour up the steep ascent, 115
 " Or shiver on the summit? Shoots thine eye
 " Oft to the fuel'd mass that boils beneath,
 " Or wakes thy breath its wildly-rushing stream
 " To shake the rocking frame, or whelm at once
 " The toil of ages?—Reason gropes in vain, 120
 " Stunn'd with the dire effect, to search the cause."

THIS said, I turn'd my wandering steps aside,
 And sought the deepest shade. There close-immured,
 Where scarce a Zephyr stirr'd the rustling boughs,
 Silent I sat, and gave my thoughts to range 125
 O'er worlds remote, as working Fancy led

served once for all in this place, that we do not intend to propose these
 apparent irregularities, as objections against the existence of a Supreme
 Mind; they are only mentioned as seeming evidences, that Providence
 does not constantly superintend the government of the world, because their
 bad consequences are not prevented by its interposition.

The

PROVIDENCE.

9

The stream of meditation; blaming now,
 And now absolving Providence. Alone
 I sat not long. A mountain's clifted side
 (Seen thro' a vifto) showed a gloomy cave, 130
 Hollow and deep, where scarce the quivering ray
 Had sprinkled glimmering twilight. The high roof,
 Curved like the arch of Heav'n, hung awful o'er
 The solemn vault below, thro' whose wide bound
 The long loud voice in many a lengthning moan 135
 Roll's on the listening ear. Advancing slow
 From this dark cell of solitary thought,
 I mark'd a venerable Sage; his cheek
 Furrow'd by Time, and o'er his hoary head
 The cold white hand of slowly-stealing Age 140
 Had shower'd its lucid silver: sweetly mild
 His looks, his mein, and rais'd to Heav'n his eyes
 Beam'd like fair Evening's dewy star, that shines
 With placid radiance: graceful was his form,
 And fimple his attire. His bending hand 145
 Lean'd on an ivory staff, the prop of Age;
 Yet firm his step, as one whose youthful blood
 Warm'd, not inflamed by Reason's temperate cheer,
 Had tinged the florid cheek, nor felt the blast
 Of cold Consumption. With slow step he scaled 150

The

The cliff, and walking to the shade, on me
 Bent a soft look that pitied, while it awed:
 Then paused; and frowning thus severe began:

WHENCE darest thy thought, O mortal born, to judge
 The Lord of heav'n and earth? Presumest thou then 155
 Weak as thou art, to dart the purblind beam
 Of glimmering Reason o'er the boundless plan,
 Wrought by eternal Wisdom? Thou, whose search
 Were vain to find what moves some earthly Prince,
 Thy brother of the dust, to vex mankind, 160
 And o'er the nations pour the waste of war
 Wanton, when Ruin stares him; nor the hand
 Of proud Ambition gains one glittering plume
 To brighten his pale crest? Rash, would'st thou then
 Fathom thy God? Know of his boundless ways, 165
 To thy short glance that trembles as it views,
 A part lies open, could thy Pride explore

That

[Of his boundless ways, — a part lies open, &c.] In this spirit Plato introduceth his account of the Origin of the World, by saying: *φύσιν ἀνθρωπίνην ἔχουσαν, ὡς περὶ τῶν τοῦ μικτοῦ Μυθοῦ ἀποδεχομένης,*

That part, and pause, when Thought's loose pinions drop,
 Loft in th' Abyss of infinite: Heav'n here
 Checks not thy search. Yet if the part exposed
 To Reason, points consummate wisdom; fair,
 Proportion'd, beauteous; as it weighs the whole,
 Impartial, let it judge the part conceal'd
 Not less harmonious, tho' from mortal ken
 Screen'd by a dark impenetrable veil.

176

175

STRUCK with his voice, that like the solemn tone
 Of some deep organ, charm'd me while it awed;
 I mark'd him silent; yet intent to know
 What Sage benevolent had deign'd to stoop
 From Heav'n, and clothed in mortal guise, to yield
 Familiar intercourse. I know thy thought,
 The Sire rejoin'd. In Me behold the Power
 Of Contemplation! From yon darksome cave,
 Where with descending Angels I converse,

180

MHAEN ETI HAPA ZHTEIN. Plat. Tim. A reflection,
 which a subject of this kind naturally suggests, though this philosopher
 exhibits a specimen of the *φύσις ἀναγκάσιμος*, by deviating on some occa-
 sions, as we shall see afterwards, from this excellent principle.

Or

Or sit in still repose, and hear afar
 The murmur of the deep, or the wild note
 Of sweet aerial music, when the robe
 Of Evening wraps the brooder'd mead: I come
 To raise thy drooping thoughts, to chase the gloom,
 The mist of Error from thy sight illumed;
 To clear the ways of providence, as far
 As Reason scans them, and unfold to man
 That perfect Beauty is their glorious End.

He spoke; and instant near the western sun,
 I spied a cloud light-floating: O'er the cliff
 It stretch'd immense, and from its radiant side
 Edg'd like the gilding of an evening sky,
 It pour'd the streamy blaze: the middle glow'd
 With deep vermillion, as the flaming ray
 Of scarlet, darting from the sun's bright orb,
 Wrought thro' the fine secreting glass, conveys
 Its trembling blush to the transported view.
 Descending slowly on the gale, it flow'd
 Spontaneous down, and nearer as it sail'd,
 Disclosed a brighter radiance to the gaze
 Of Wonder rapt in sight. At last it stood

All loose, and bursting like the fullen gloom
 Before the lightning's rapid flash, display'd
 Bright Fancy crown'd. Her keenly-piercing eye
 Glanc'd o'er the scene that lighten'd as she came 210
 With hasty step, and shook her dazzling wings
 That sparkled in the sun: a wavy robe
 Mantled her bosom, sweeping as she trod,
 A loose luxuriance, and the Zephyr sigh'd
 Soft thro' its swelling folds. Her right hand held 215
 A globe, where Nature's towering fabric rose,
 A living picture! All the scenes that glow
 Day-robed and lovely, in some aery dream,
 Where Spring comes tripping o'er the low green dale,
 And strows its lap with flowers. These o'er the piece 220
 Profusely shone. Her left a magic rod
 Sustain'd, that waving as she will'd, transform'd
 The face of things, as wildly-working thought
 Call'd up discordant images, or roled
 By Reason, form'd them gradual, to confirm 225
 Some truth, yet dubious to th' enquiring mind.
 LIGHT o'er the hanging cliff she sprung, the dew
 Quick as the meteor gleaming o'er the plain;

Till

Till near the place where wrapt in still amaze,
Intent I stood, her forward step she staid
Elate, and smiling, thus address'd the Sire.

" Lo ! to thy call responsive, I attend
" Obsequious ! from the fields of Ether, clad
" Eternal in the broider'd robes of Spring,
" Where the dew wets not her gay-blooming cheek,
" Nor Winter taints her purple plumes ; I come
" Commision'd, of thy arduous task apprised,
" To dash the boast of high-presuming Hope,
" That dares to scan th' Eternal ; and unveil
" What Heav'n permits the prying thought to know."

SHE spoke, and sudden o'er the sable scene
Waved her transforming rod ; whose touch dissolved
The mountain's brow, that gradual sunk supine
Down on the widening vale. Unfolding fair,
I saw, surrounded with contiguous shades,
A spacious plain, within whose circling bound,
Edg'd with brown forests, meadows, groves, and lawns,
A mighty City tower'd ; sublime as that
Fabled by Neptune's labouring arm, to rear

PROVIDENCE.

Its spires to Heav'n, and fated to defy * 250
 All but the power of Wisdom: Round its sides,
 A range of Gardens, gay as those which crown'd *
 Thy work, Semiramis, luxuriant waved
 With Autumn's mellow growth; the flowering shrub
 Breathed myrrh, and balm, and cassia in the gale, 255
 Perfumed with mingling odours, and the bough
 Blush'd with delicious fruitage: deeply tinged
 With downy gold, the nectar'd peach display'd
 Its yellow rind, and loosely-clustering near,
 Grapes, melons, pines, the children of the sun, 260
 Hung ripe and tempting, to the forward hand
 Of Luxury unfated. Fairer far
 The blooming scene, than sings the melting lyre
 Of soft Pomona's haunts, the fabled groves,
 Where rose-lip'd Plenty shower'd the blushing spoils 265
 Of each revolving season. All within
 Was noise and pastime. O'er the spacious street
 Roam'd frolic Mirth, and fly Deceit behind

* Fated to defy, &c.] Troy.

* Gay as those which crown'd, &c.] The hanging gardens of Babylon.

Danced

Danced like a gay Buffoon: Intemperance
 Reel'd from the feast of Bacchus: Business ran
 Hurried and lumber'd, with dispatchful haste
 From man to man; while idly-lolling Ease
 Lean'd on a couch of down, by Zephirs cool'd,
 And sweetly-lull'd by the lute's languid lay.

CHARM'D with the sight, that to the glancing eye
 Of Thought, recalled ten thousand rushing scenes;
 I gazed transfix'd with wonder! Still Amaze
 Lock'd up my powers a moment! Till released
 By Reason's lenient hand, I cast my eyes
 Lost in sweet transport o'er the dewy lawns;
 Where gay-robed Beauty's liberal lap had shower'd
 Profuse of wealth, the richest treasures out
 Wild in unsparing waste. "Almighty God,
 "This is thy work! (thus thought the kindling soul,
 "To transport rais'd) the deeply-tinctured bloom
 "That paints yon blushing flower, is but the stroke
 "Of thy transforming pencil; and the air
 "Perfumed with balm and myrrh, wafts the rich spoils
 "From all thy works in incense to thy throne!"

THUS

THUS I, transported with the present scenes, 290
 Nor minding these to come. 'Twas now the time
 Of burning noon, and from his radiant car,
 Led by the silver-pinion'd Hours, the Sun
 Shot his bright blaze o'er all th' unbounded scene,
 That scorch'd the field with drought. A neighbouring bower
 Waved to the gale umbrageous, and inticed 296
 The limbs of panting Labour to repose
 In its refreshing cool. Thither we came
 Fatigued, and resting on a couch of flowers
 That breathed perfume, beheld th' adjacent scenes 300
 Display'd in boundless prospect. But the eye
 Was soon diverted to a sight more strange.

For lo! arising in the sultry south,
 Where the sun flamed intense; a bluish mist,
 Wrought from a Mine of Nitre, breathed its steam 305
 Full on the tainted Gale! An earthquake shook
 The hollow ground; and Darkness rising flow,
 Bear'd her bold arm imperious to the Sun,
 And bloated half his beams. At last the Earth
 Burst up, and shooting thro' the mighty void, 310
 Rose a shapeless Monster! On his brow
 Sat Terror and Despair; dark, dismal, wan;

And nursed a brood of snakes, shed by the fell
 Typhone! The thirty Furies fired
 His thoughts to blood and slaughter; and his eyes 315
 Shot like a gleam of lightning o'er the field,
 And wither'd all its bloom. Medusa's head
 That struck th' unwary gazer into stone,
 Wrought not a change more wondrous. On he strode
 With step terrific, for his baleful breath 320
 Was blasting poison, and his hand sustain'd
 A sword that smok'd with blood. Graved on the blade,
 Appear'd conspicuous his distinguish'd name,
 The PESTILENCE! Spare, gracious Heav'n (exclaim'd
 My frantic soul) O spare the race of man! 325

IN vain! for onward came the grisly shape;
 And raised his wasteful hand, and shook his hair
 That dropp'd with steamy sulphur. Thro' the gate
 Of that proud City, tottering to a fall,
 He pass'd tremendous. Famine at his heels 330
 Incessant yell'd, and roll'd her ghastly eyes;
 And gnaw'd a living vultur. As they strode,
 Loud rose the voice of Woe! I saw the sword,
 A gleamy blade, by that relentless hand
 Plunged in the heart of Innocence! I saw, 335

Where

Where the wild Mother, to her throbbing breast
 Impatient clasp'd the child, that look'd its soul,
 Writhed with strong pangs; and spread its little hands,
 Guiltless of harm, to ask the lenient balm
 Of Love's reviving breath: She to its lips
 Distracted clung; and o'er its clammy limbs
 Pour'd the warm gush of unavailing woe.

Thus o'er the City roam'd this dreadful pair,
 And mark'd their steps with slaughter, As the sword
 Of that destroying Angel, sent to quell
 The pride of Pharaoh, in one dismal night
 Smote the first-born of Egypt's mighty sons,
 And struck her King with dread. Thus the dire hands
 Of these fell Furies laid the City waste;
 And fill'd its streets with carnage, blood, despair.

THRILL'D with amaze and horror, as I view'd
 This change unhoped; back to my fluttering heart
 Rush'd the chill blood. Commiseration, dread,
 Benevolence, and pity, thro' my soul
 Shot with resistless violence, and charged
 Each thought with piercing anguish. Sure the Sire

Of Heav'n and Earth disdains this child of woe,
 And man was made in vain! Weak as thou art,
 (Replied, incensed the venerable Power
 Of Contemplation) cease thy rash complaint;
 Or dread the hand of Vengeance. He who rules
 Yon star-crown'd arch, who in the day of wrath
 Grasps the red bolt, and shoots his lightnings thro'
 The quaking soul of Guilt; points not the flame,
 Nor grasps the bolt in vain. 'Tis Vice that shades
 His brow with frowns, and bids stern Justice strike,
 Where gentle Mercy meant to save. But see
 Yon blackening cloud, and mark what meets thy gaze,

I LOOK'D, and sudden from the stormy north,
 Out rush'd a wheeling Whirlwind: from a cloud
 Black with imprison'd storms, it swept along
 Impetuous. Towering on its gloomy wing
 An Angel rode; of port sublime, and eyes
 That flash'd the living lightning. O'er his arm
 Hung the transparent shield; a flaming spear
 Waved in his hand; and on his helmed brow,
 Perch'd like an eagle, sat the godlike Power
 Of Victory. Light as the glancing ray,
 He sprung with rapid flight, intent to reach

The monster hewing his dire course. Alarm'd 380
He stood, and sudden felt his withering limbs
Charged by superior power. From his weak hand
He dropt the sword; his ruffling garment flew
Loose to the wind: till by the Angel's arm
Raised high, the maddening whirlwind bore him far 385
To caves untraced by man. Soon as he fled,
Flam'd the refulgent beam: along the lawn
The foliage blossom'd; and the groves around
Pour'd forth unnumber'd their melodious tribes
Sweet-tongued, that warbling pour'd the mazy stream 390
Of Harmony; and rapt the list'ning ear
Of wakeful Echo to resound their lays,

As lost in thought the musing mind revolved
This scene of wonders; the superior Power
Long paused, and serious, thus resumed his theme. 395

THERE let thy mind behold the ways of God,
Nor trust conjecture's purblind eye to pore
In labyrinths inaccessible, where lost,
Weak Reason gropes, yet o'er that scanty span
Exposed to view, discerns such beauteous traits; 400

Such fair-proportion'd symmetry, as shews
The hand of Wisdom in this glorious frame.

BUT late, as thro' the heath th' autumnal breeze
Chill-piercing blew; informing Fancy call'd
Thy bowers, fair Eden, to th' enraptur'd view;
Where o'er elysian lawns, and mantling groves,
And rills sweet-murmuring, and high-arching woods;
And dales where Luxury reposed her limbs
To dream of Heav'n; where o'er these blissful scenes,
Gay Summer brightning breathed eternal bloom.
Rash! know'st thou not that was the boon bestow'd?
Thy thoughts demand, far other farms than thine
Were wanted, mid the sultry heat to breathe
Alive and vigorous; o'er the scorching soil,
All warm with vegetating life, to bend
Th' unceasing step, nor feel the copious dew
Smoke o'er the loosened limbs, that fainting claim
The rushing winds to cool them. O'er the flies,
Till late unknown, where oft thy harpy hand,
Insatiate Avarice, with sure aim conveys
The hardy Spaniard to his grave; what taints
The air with death, but that the blazing Sun
Pours o'er the lawns his yellow-streaming ray,

That

That from the shooting plant's loose-ruffled leaves
 Exhales the reeking moisture. When no breeze^f 429
 Fresh from the ocean, shakes its cooling wing
 Along the mead, the slowly mingling scents,
 Oft steam'd from life-consuming herbs, infect
 The stagnant air, and thro' the blood diffuse
 Their breath, that gradual drinks the vital flood, 430
 Or bids Life's dimly-glimmering lamp expire.

[*When no breeze, &c.*] The Philippine islands, fertile as they are said to be in producing whatever is beneficial to man, are yet in some respects particularly dangerous, and even destructive. The soil of these is generally moist, and the heat intense, as some of them lie within six or seven degrees of the æquator. They share indeed the advantages of other islands, by being refreshed with breezes from the sea, and the constant action of the sun produceth a rapid and vigorous vegetation; yet this last circumstance is often prejudicial to the inhabitants, and particularly to foreigners, as the soil perpetually moistened either by rains or by subterraneous currents, teems with poisonous herbs, whose effluvia infect the air, and destroy the people. This however only happens when those herbs are budding, and when the sea-breezes intermit their operation: they are likewise subject to the shock of Earthquakes, which are sometimes attended with the most pernicious consequences. The Spaniards, who settle in these islands, are swept off in multitudes by these destructive qualities of the air.

YET grant that o'er thy haunt refreshing gales
 Should breathe, and waft from aromatic groves
 Their sweets; that every flower with heightned bloom
 Should paint thy smiling walk, and every breeze 435
 Blow from a citron bank. Say, would the earth
 Demand no respite & from its waste? The air,
 No

[*Would the earth demand no respite, &c.*] Inter cetera itaque Providentiae opera hoc quoque aliquis ut dignum admiratione suspexerit. Non enim ex una causa Ventos aut invenit, aut per diversa disposuit; sed primum ut aera non finerent pigrescere, sed assidua vexatione utilem redderent vitalemque tracturis. Sen. Nat. Quaest. This theory is certainly consonant both to reason and experience: the purest air must at last become fetid and stagnant, when there is a constant and vigorous vegetation in the earth; and no suitable commotion is excited in the atmosphere to disperse the exhalations which are perpetually arising from it. To be convinced of this, we need only to consider the different temperature which takes place in mountainous countries, from that which obtains in a wet and marshy soil: the air, rarefied and exhilarated (if I may be permitted that expression) in the former case, as it is pent up and putrid in the other, produceth an obvious effect, not only upon the habit and complexion, but even upon the manners of the inhabitants, and upon the diseases to which both are subjected. Nor is it to be supposed that the airs of summer will alone be sufficient to the task of purifying the atmosphere.

No chilling blast to bid its mist dispel,
And shake th' innumerable living race, that skim
Its void unseen with undulating wing,

phere. These, however cool and refreshing, seem rather to have been intended for the purpose of effectuating a temporary intermission of the effects, than of thoroughly eradicating the cause. To accomplish the latter of these ends, it is necessary either that frequent rains, or piercing frosts, should destroy those innumerable animalcules which impregnate the elements in the sultry season, and render the air particularly noxious. In the order of nature, this alternate succession of heat and cold, and of drought and rain, is likewise indispensably necessary to the welfare of the globe. Exhausted by severe vegetation, the earth, like a strong constitution worn out with labour, requires a relaxation from its toil; and a supply of fresh juices to invigorate anew the productions of the succeeding seasons: these are liberally communicated to it, and this end is completely effectuated during the continuance of winter. In northern climates, the frosts put an end to severe vegetation, and the snow impregnates the soil with salts, which circulate freely when it is unloosed by a thaw: this circulation is probably the cause of that gross and hazy atmosphere which almost always takes place on occasions of this kind. In hotter countries, the same effects are produced by severe and continued rains. For a fuller discussion of this subject, the reader may consult Derham's *Physico-Theology*, vol. i. ch. 2. and *Speſtac. de la Nature*, v. 3.

Loose from the loaded maps? When Winter binds
 The glebe, or blasts the swarming tribes, or drinks
 The circling fluids^h, from the withering plant
 Retiring slow, to spread their vital juice
 Thro' the rough bosom of the parent soil : 445
 Then wearied Nature from her toil relax'd,
 Shares rest; and, as th' o'er labour'd frame, restored
 By sleep's dissolving opiate, to its work
 Springs with invigorated nerves, alive,
 Active, and airy. Thus the pregnant earth, 450
 Soon as attended by the fanning Gales
 Young Spring appears, from its soft bosom pours
 In rich profusion all th' unbounded store
 That wakes high transport in the heart of man.

^h *Drinks the circling fluids, &c.*] Εαν δὲ ἡ οὐρανὸς περιεκαλυμμένη
 οὐ γινώσκει ἐν αὐτῇ βοτάναι, ἀλλὰ ἀντὶ φύλλων. Ἀπεχρησται γὰρ
 ἐκ αὐτῆς ἡ εὐκρασία τῆς γῆς ἡ οὐρανὸς αὐτή. Ὅθεν αἰθὴ καὶ φύλλα
 ἐν βοτάναις σπινδαίσι μεμνημένα γινώσκονται ἐν τοκοῖς κεκραμένους κα-
 θέτους δὲ αἰσῶς καὶ ὑδατῶν. Εἰ στίβοι δὲ με τοιοῦτοι σπινδαί αἰσῶς τὰ
 αἰθὴ, καὶ τὰ φύλλα τῶν φυτῶν τῶν ἀνδραγατῶν ἐν τῇ γῇ.
 Aristot. de Plan. lib. 2.

P R O V I D E N C E. 327

THE Seasons thus, harmonious as they roll, 455
 Have each its separate use; to warm the soil
 With genial heat; to bid its moisture flow
 Thro' the fine fibres of the shooting plant
 Slow-raised; to call thy fair assemblage forth,
 Triumphant Beauty! Daughter of the Dawn! 460
 Queen of the rosy-smiling mead! to swell
 To full luxuriance thy gay-broider'd train,
 What time from laughing Ceres, o'er the field
 Loose drops the yellow sheaf; or when thy wing
 All-radiant on th' autumnal gale ascends, 465
 To pour rich juices thro' the fertile earth;
 That Nature in her robe of living green,
 Deck'd like a Bridegroom for his nuptial hour,
 All-breathing balm, may hail thy loved return.

Lost were this fair harmonious round, that wakes 470
 The soul to joy; lost were the vivid bloom
 Of Health that mantles on the cheek of youth
 In smiles: the herbage of the field would shrink
 Livid and lank, should constant Summer scorch
 The thirsty plain. The fainting Swain would drop 475
 His lifeless limbs; the world of water stand

Stagnant

Stagnant and putrid; and the fell-eyed plague¹
 (Like that which walks o'er Asia's sultry fields)
 Would raise an arm of terror¹, waste the earth,
 Tremendous in his course; and from the Globe
 Sweep half its people as he roam'd along.

¹ *The fell-eyed plague*—*would raise an arm of terror, &c.*] The learned and pious author of *Physico-Theology* observes very justly on this subject, that if the whole mass of air and vapours was always at rest, instead of refreshing and animating, it would suffocate and poison all the world; but the perpetual commotions it receives from gales and storms, keep it pure and healthful. Thus far Mr. Derham, *Physico-Theolog.* vol. i. p. 21.—The reader will, probably, assent to the truth of this remark, who reflects, that the malignant distempers which rage in great cities, can only be ascribed to the fetid air confined in such places, and not properly circulated by the action of the winds. The perpetual exhalations which arise, especially in hot and dry seasons, either from the concourse of inhabitants, or from causes of a similar nature; not being dissipated by the elements, occasion a stagnation of the air, by which the human body is immediately affected. These putrid effluvia being afterwards dispersed over the open country, are perhaps the original causes of those epidemical distempers, for which we are often so much puzzled to account, and from whose influence the air is never wholly free, until it is purified by frosts or tempests.

HENCE

HENCE Heaven's great Father sends the rushing winds
 Abroad, and bids the swelling Tempest roar
 Wide o'er the howling wilderness. Afar,
 The tower all naked, where the shrieking owl
 Broods o'er her young, sustains the fierce assault
 That shakes its domes. The Mother scared within,
 Oft as the shock'd wall totters, starting leaves
 Her nest, and oft returning, as the voice
 Of Parent love persuades, she sits alone,
 And screams, wild-wailing to the wasteful winds.

OFT from the caverns ^k of the hollow'd earth
 Bursts the rude storm, or from the breezy lake
 Shapes its broad circuit, gathering as it rolls
 Collected force. Oft from the jarring clouds ^l

^k *Oft from the caverns, &c.]* See Derham's Physico-Theol. ubi sup.

^l *Oft from the jarring clouds.]* Quoique bien des vents viennent de dessous terre, ou ils sont causés par un cours d'air, que de feux souterrains chassent & débloquent violemment, il y a aussi de vents qui nous viennent du milieu des nues; & qui sont souvent des ravages affreux dans une petite étendue de pais, en y tombant presque à plomb, & en manière de tourbillons, sans s'étendre plus loin. Spect. de la Nat. ubi sup.

Dashing in dizzy whirl, tempestuous rolls
 The deep-mouthed Thunder thro' the darksome vault
 Of Heav'n: the winds attend it, and the skies
 From their wide sluices pour a torrent down,
 Rushing impetuous. On thy thirsty fields,
 Fair India, scorch'd beneath the solar blaze,
 Descends the Deluge! O'er the plains it spreads,
 A boundless inundation! The full tides,^m
 Swelling and copious^m, as th' exhausted soil
 A liberal waste demands, slow-settling, warm
 The glebe, and thro' its glowing mass, infuse
 Fresh moisture, ripening for the growth of Spring.

Oft too the Whirlwind's rapid wheel involves
 Th' encumber'd forest in its round; the trees

^m *The full tides, swelling and copious*] It is worth observing, that as the earth in hot countries must be more exhausted by the severe vegetation which takes place in the sultry seasons, than it can be in more moderate climates, where these seasons continue likewise for a much shorter time; they are therefore supplied with a proportioned quantity of rain in the wet season, which answers to our winter, that this waste may be repaired speedily and completely: the whirlwinds in these countries probably answer the same end that frosts and tempests do in ours.

Rent from the cliff precipitating, load 510
 The wings of air; the harmless flocks that roam,
 Secure, nor dream the sudden death so near;
 Give to the eddying whirl their shiver'd limbs,
 The City feels it, and the tottering domes
 Rock from their inmost base; or loose, affrighted
 The pale inhabitant, that stalks within,
 Panting, and shudders as the roaring winds
 Around him bellow; lest the cracking beam
 Should burst, and o'er him the broad roof descend.

YET hence the steams^a that taint the putrid air 520
 Dissolve at once, as by yon Angel's arm
 Thou saw'st the blood-stain'd Pestilence dispell'd.
 Hence purer spirits thro' the blood diffused,
 Give to the lip its ruby-tinctured hue;
 Hence Health's gay smile illumines the dimpling cheek; 525
 And the pulse lightly dances, as the breast
 Inhales, slow-heaved, the pure refreshing air.

^a [Thence the steams, &c.] Παλλοι τε και ισχυροι ανεμοι μαλιστα
 ετοι. Πισοιτις γαρ εγγυθεν μαλιστα αποδιαζομενοι τα αλλα πνευματα
 παυουσι, και αποφυζοντις τα συσγαμμενα κρη ποιουσιν αιθρας αι μη
 ψυχροι σφοδρα τυχωσιν αμα οντις. Aristot. Meteor. lib. 2. c. 6.

WHEN o'er the field, yet dropping from the shower,
 Ascends the hazy thick'ning mist, exhaled
 From every dew-stain'd herb; the fanning gale 530
 Thence gently whispering * breathes along the plain,
 And from the foliage of the drooping flower,
 Brushing the liquid drops, recalls their bloom,
 Brightning, and bids the face of Nature smile.

BID now thy thought P explore these beauteous scenes. 535
 See'st thou no order in th' harmonious round

Of

* *The fanning gale thence gently whispering, &c.*] Ουτο και επι των τοπων αντιπεριεργασθαι και μεταβαλλειν τας αναθυμιασεις. Ετι δε μετα τους ομβρους ανιμος ως τα πολλα γινεται εν εκεινοις τοις τοποις καθ' ος αν συμπυση γινεσθαι τοις ομβροις και τα πνευματα παυεται υδατος γενομενοι.

P *Bid now thy thought, &c.*] The reader will observe, that in the preceding reflections we have only enumerated a few of the more obvious advantages which arise from winds, as these are in some measure necessary to the life of man, without mentioning other respects in which they become subservient to his conveniency. Thus we must immediately be convinced, that, without these useful servants, all intercourse betwixt distant nations

Of Seasons ? In the Tempest's whirl appears
 No print of Wisdom ? Mark'st thou not its rage
 (So wills the Lord of Nature) to the good
 Of all subservient ? In his great design, 540
 Not Winter's rushing sweep, nor the wild wing
 Of Whirlwinds howling o'er the boiling waves ;
 Nor the strong Storm's loud uproar ; less promote
 The general end ; than Summer's genial ray

nations must be wholly at an end. Navigation in that case would be an
 useless art ; and commerce, the parent of culture as well as of luxury,
 could no longer be carried on. The remote countries, which open to us
 so many new sources of pleasure, would either never have been discovered,
 or the discovery must at once cease to be beneficial. In short, mankind,
 supposing them capable of living, must in such a case soon degenerate into
 their original barbarity. We have likewise taken no notice of the Ete-
 sian winds, as they are called, which blow regularly at different seasons
 from the north and south poles to the equator ; nor of the trade-winds,
 so beneficial to the inhabitants of the torrid zone on both sides of the equa-
 tor ; as their direction is either easterly betwixt it and the northern tropic,
 or as they blow from the south pole when the sun hath passed the equinoctial
 line. A minute detail of these points would have run the poem into
 too much length, without advancing the principal end, which is only to
 take notice of the most striking and conspicuous marks which the world
 exhibits of order or design.

That gilds the laughing landskip; or the breeze 545
 Of mellow Autumn, when the ripened sheaf,
 Nodding and copious, claims the Reaper's hand.

Now turn thy sight. He spoke, and as the wand
 Of Fancy waved obsequious; the long lawns,
 The grove, the gardens, and the glittering towers, 550
 At once dissolved in fluid air. A scene
 Naked and desert as Arabia's wilds,
 Where roams the famish'd Lion, and his yell
 Scares the dim Ghost; around me frowning, thrill'd
 My inmost soul with horror. All around, 555
 'Twas one rude pile of hills high-heap'd on hills;
 Or tyger-haunted dens, or darksome caves;
 Or rocks stupendous, where the brouzing kid
 Seem'd quivering like a loose and ragged stone,
 Hung o'er th' aerial precipice! O'er all, 560
 One mountain tower'd superior, like the peak
 Of Teneriff, amid contiguous heights
 That shade the fields around. Rapt to the brow
 Of a rude cliff, whence all the horrid scene
 Rush'd on my startled gaze; I mark'd behind 565
 That topmost spire, a long and ragged pile
 Of Towers, and mouldering Obelisks, and Fanes

Sublime

Sublime in ruin ! whence the raven pour'd
 Her boding wail ; and, thro' the midnight gloom,
 Pale Fear might picture there the sheeted Ghost 570
 Measuring his slow and solemn step ! Before,
 The white dust hovering thro' the misty air,
 Sat on the silent solitary hills,
 Where the wild eagle wheel'd his weary wing,
 Vain hope, to search his prey. Blue brimstone scath'd 575
 Their sides ; and from their feet, the little rills
 That stole low-murmuring thro' the parched vale ;
 Smoked, as they stray'd in lessen'd streams along.

SLOW as my rapt eye roll'd from shade to shade,
 And spoke the mind perplex'd : its plaint at last 580
 Burst to my lips. " Ah, why these horrid rocks
 " Shaggy and formless ? Did th' Eternal mark
 " His work in wrath with these enormous mounds,
 " Whose sight terrific damps the vital stream,
 " And checks the smile of Joy ? " 585

SUDDEN I ceased ; for lo, a dreadful scene
 Fix'd all my wondering powers in still amaze !
 Heaved with unusual strength, as if the arm
 Of some superior Power had shook the frame

Of labouring Nature, all th' unbounded hills 590
 Rose from their base ! We heard the solemn voice
 Of Thunder from beneath, that harl'd along,
 And loudly-murmuring roll'd from cave to cave.
 Mute was the scene, and awful ! Not a breath
 Fann'd the still desert ! Not an insect-wing 595
 Weak-waving whisper'd in the waste of air.
 The deep Hill groan'd, as if the storm within
 Had tore its rocking form, and on the void
 Of Æther, spread the doubling smoke afar,
 As from a boiling furnace ! From its mouth, 600
 At last wide-opening, rush'd the smother'd flame,
 And blaz'd to Heav'n ! The fiery stream display'd,
 Stood like a column in the dusky cloud,
 And cast a livid gleam, pale as the eye
 Of Lightning glanced along the fullen gloom. 605

WIDE o'er the boundless waste, the shower of fire
 Rush'd on, and crackling wrapt in sitting flame
 Its scanty growth, yet recent from the blast
 Of former Desolation : till the blaze
 Retiring gradual, spent its wasteful power ; 610
 And nought but Horror frown'd o'er all the scene.

DUBIOUS I stood, and to the hoary Sage
Timid, yet eager, rais'd a trembling look;
Who pitying mark'd my wish, and thus began.

THY mind unknowing the Almighty's ways 615
Involved in clouds, beholds these varying scenes
Perplex'd, nor views them with discerning thought.
Yon howling wild, woods, mountains, dens, and caves,
So rudely heap'd; the Hill, whose fuel'd sides
Are clothed with sulphur, and high-streaming, threat 620
The works of man with ruin. These survey'd
Thro' thy false medium Sense, mislead thy view;
And veil from Judgment's deeper search, their end.

WEIGH then uninfluenced, with impartial eye,
What lies before thee. Form thy estimate 625
Of things, not weakly from the first false draught
That strikes thy sight, and to the startled gaze
Of Fancy, teems with horror; but suspend
Thy full decision, till slow-judging Thought
Hath scann'd a Whole, and view'd the separate parts, 630
As each subservient in the general plan
To some superior end, o'erlook'd by Sense,
But found by Reason's cool and just review.

Thus seen, yon pile of ruins will offend
 The judging mind no more. Say, would'st thou with 635
 The Hills dissolved; thou, whose insatiate Hope
 Deems not that Beauty in the yellow field,
 The haunt of Ceres reigns; nor sits enthroned
 High o'er the sweeping architrave; nor walks
 Along the level lawn; but still displeased, 640
 Pants for variety & in all. When wrapt
 To

¶ *Pants for variety, &c.*] This truth is conspicuous upon every occasion, and is perhaps as characteristic of human nature as any circumstance whatever. In viewing external objects, every man is in some degree disgusted with uniformity; and the only difference betwixt an intelligent and an illiterate man in such a case, is, that the former can assign the cause of his dissatisfaction; while the latter is possessed of the same feeling, but enquires not into the principle from which it proceeds. Thus the view of a long, dead, flat country, where

No pleasing intricacies intervene,

No artful wildness to perplex the scene; POPE.

is tiresome and disagreeable to every individual. There are indeed some painful as there are some delightful feelings, peculiarly appropriated to persons of refinement and delicacy. Thus in such a villa as the poet abovementioned has described that of Timon; where,

Grove

To the wild summit of some airy cliff
 Hung o'er the murmuring deep; thine eye beholds
 Here, on the tide's green mirror, the mild beam
 Of Evening streaming gold: or there surveys 645
 The white wave rushing to the solid rock
 Unmoved; the loose light quivering, as it rolls
 Back to the Ocean. When bright Fancy's gaze
 Turns quick, and joyous eyes the shores around,

Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother,
 And half the platform just reflects the other.

Taste would be disgusted, where Folly or Ignorance might be rapt in admiration; yet as some degree of those radical principles which characterize human nature, exists in every mind; there are, I believe, very few men who would not prefer to such a scene as this, the variegated intermixture of hill and dale, streams and woods, gardens and wilderness, agreeably contributing to relieve the eye with a succession of new objects, where

Speluncæ, vivique lacus, & frigida Tempe,
 Mugitusque boum, mollesque sub arbore somni
 Non absunt.

VIRG.

Who would not, I say, prefer this prospect to the former, supposing him to be in case to give his judgment of both from immediate inspection?

A boundless waste ! and sees the smiling meads, 659
 Or towers gay glittering, or unfolding lawns,
 Or navies riding on the ridgy wave !
 Say then, would pining Thought demand the vale,
 Or deem th' aerial height that gives the scenes
 To man's astonish'd sight, a casual fault 655
 Of Nature ? Clear'd of these majestic piles,
 Where were the ruder scenes seen from the hills
 Of Caledonia ? the romantic wild,
 Solemn and vast, the rock's rough height display'd,
 So wildly great, that, like a mouldering Tower, 660
 Stands on the naked waste ! The mountains piled,
 Sublime in horrid grandeur to the sky,
 That shrouds their misty brow ; where Nature sits
 In rude magnificence, and hears the roar
 Of distant billows murmuring on her ear ? 665

NOR thus hath Nature form'd the varied globe
 Alone to soothe bold Fancy's wondering ken.
 But Health gay-smiling ' haunts the chilly hill,

A moun-

[But Health gay-smiling, &c.] One of the principal uses to which
 mountains are subservient, is unquestionably the health which they are the
 means

A mountain-nymph, no fullen cloud obscures
 Her shining eyes; but on her balmy lip 670
 The ruby deepens; o'er her lightned limbs
 Sweeps her fair robe luxuriant; and her breath
 Exhales the fragrance of the scented dale,
 When first Aurora's crimson-streaming ray
 Breaks out, and trembling gilds the placid scene. 675

means of procuring to persons who languish in moist and unwholsome air. In low countries, it is impossible that this element can be so pure and rarified, as it is on the summit of mountains; and where the soil is naturally marshy, even the frosts and storms of winter are not always sufficient to remove the pernicious effects which frequently result from it. The vapours which ascend from mountains, are, on the contrary, instantly dissipated by the winds; and the fogs which sometimes surround them, cannot on that account produce such effects upon the health of the inhabitants, as the continuance of these generally does in flat or low countries. May we not likewise conclude, that as botanists generally find the most wholsome medicinal herbs on the sides or on the tops of mountains; the air, which is impregnated with the effluvia exhaled from these, must contribute to preserve health, in the same manner as the herbs themselves are salutary to restore it? Whatever may be in this, it is certain, that the change of air in chronical diseases, is the most effectual of those innumerable expedients which the invention of man hath contrived to acquire the possession of the most inestimable benefit.

HENCE

HENCE oft' Disease *, thy wither'd train, that feel
 The maddening Ague thro' their shrivel'd nerves,
 Alternate scattering frost, or pouring flame :
 Or mourn the shooting rheum, or languid droop
 In slow consumption, when the labouring breast 68a
 Heaves high with fetid air : while here they breathe
 The purer elemental gale, refin'd,
 And free, rejoicing, see the dusky face
 Of Nature brighten, and transported swim
 Frolic and light, thro' life's harmonious maze. 68g

SEEKST thou yon rills † that o'er the channel'd rock,
 Low-tinkling wind to reach the hollow'd vale ?

These

* *Hence oft' Disease, &c.*] In this enumeration of human miseries, the reader will observe, that we have mentioned only those diseases which are generally ascribed to unwholesome air.

† *Seekst thou yon rills, &c.*] We are now come to a subject which has occasioned much speculation ; I mean the origin of fountains. That these are derived primarily from the hills which are scattered over the face of the earth, is a principle laid down by almost every author who treats of this curious and agreeable enquiry. Plato is the only ancient writer who speaks of the origin of fountains, without mentioning of the hills ; and who

These slowly filter'd as they slide along
The beds of ore, or thro' the soft'ned earth

Descend;

who derives these from a cause altogether independent. This writer, after laying it down as a principle that the internal structure of the earth is hollow and cavernous, supposeth that there is *Ἐν τῇ τῶν χασμάτων τῆς γῆς*, one of those chasms of the earth infinitely greater than any of the others, and extending its arms through the whole globe; and in this capacious reservoir he imagines the waters to be collected. This he tells us is the *Barathrum* of Homer;

Τῆλε μάλ' ἤχι βαθιστὸν ὑπο χθονὸς ἐστὶ βεραθρον.

This immense flood, he says, is perpetually agitated by the circumambient air; which when it is raised to the external surface, and is straitened by the inundation of water, occasions incredible commotions, both as it enters and rushes out of this receptacle. When therefore (says he) the waters are forced downwards by this impetus of the air, they stream along the channels of the earth in rivulets. These collected together, form the rivers; and the whole mass rolls in separate beds into seas, lakes, fountains, &c. with which the globe is so beautifully diversified. *Phæd.* This theory however is rather ingenious than solid. Not to mention the absurdity of supposing an internal receptacle of this kind fitted to contain the waters, when all the ends answered by it are effectuated with facility by a more obvious expedient; we cannot believe (as Aristotle justly observes)

Descend; o'er all the silent valley steal
Sweet murmuring; or to the thirsty swain

Irriguous

ferres) that there is any void within the earth capacious enough to contain the whole mass of waters; and the air, forcing them backwards with so much velocity as to give birth to seas and rivers on the external surface of the globe, is wholly chimerical. This great philosopher, after refuting the opinion of his adversary, proceeds to establish his own. Experience, he tells us, declares, that there is indeed some collection of springs under ground, from which fountains and rivers are originally derived; and these, he says, are liberally supplied from the hills, through which the rain sinking as through a sponge, penetrates the fissures of the mountain, and flows in streams along the vallies. As a proof of this he observes, not only that fountains are always contiguous to eminencies, but likewise, that the strength and breadth of the current is generally proportioned to the size of the mountain from which it proceeds. Πλειστοι και μεγιστοι ποταμοι ρεουσι εκ των μεγιστων Ορων. Οι γαρ ορεινοι και υψηλοι τοποι οινι σπογγος πυκνος επικρεμαμενος κατα μικρα μεν δε διαπιδωσι και συλλεγουσι το υδωρ. Aristot. Meteor. Lib. I. This theory he afterwards confirms by examples. The ingenious author of Spectacle de la Nature has examined this subject with great accuracy. He observes, that we ought not to consider the surface and texture of mountains, in the same manner as we do that of the vallies or plains. The former, he tells us, abound with fissures, chinks, subterraneous caves and grottos, and cells prepared for the reception of water. Their summits attract the vapours

Irriguous wind, who, near the steep ascent,
 Fatigued and fainting, quaffs the cooling stream.

HENCE might the studious philosophic eye
 Trace to its source the river's swelling tide, 695
 That rolls in majesty serene; might see
 Euphrates, rising from a scanty rill,
 That feebly wanders down the fruitful side
 Of Ararat; till swell'd with rushing tides,
 That rapid current o'er Armenia's fields 700
 Bursts wide and billowy; thro' the sun-scorch'd plains
 Of Syria rolls, and aids, profusely kind,
 Arabia's woods to scent the balmly gale.

WHAT time hot Sirius in the acreal void
 Rears his red front, and o'er the parched field 705

vapours of the atmosphere, which condense into rain, and soak through the sandy stratum above, until their course being impeded by some hard and solid layer of clay or stone, they stream along the surface of it, and issue at last into the open air. The process by means goes on gradually, and the store of waters is not exhausted by a sudden and impetuous discharge, which would otherwise make the earth perpetually fluctuate betwixt the extremes of inundation and drought. This is but a very short sketch of our author's ingenious theory. See Spectac. de la Nat. V. 3. Entret. 21.

Wide

Wide darts the fiery blaze ; the wakeful view
 Of cool Philosophy might trace the Nile,
 As rushing down the Abyssinian hills,
 Bursts the whole liquid atmosphere ; high-raised,
 O'erflow his slimy bank ; or Niger spread 710
 His blackning wave ; or Ganges to the main,
 Triumphant tumbling wild his torrent stream.

FAR in the hills where from the scourge of Power
 Remote ; a free and hardy people reign,
 Thy children Liberty ! whose happy fields 715
 Smoke not with human blood, the furgy Rhine
 Draws his first spring ; and broiders many a vale
 With flowers that paint his aery bank ; and rolls
 His current onward, with collected rills
 Slow-swelling ; till his copious urn supplied, 720
 Down rush the floods with aggregated roar,
 And through Germania wind, where many a tower
 Darken the fable flood ; and sweeping wide,
 Thence hold thro' Gallia's fields their lengthening way ;
 Till roll'd thro' happier plains, where Commerce pours 725
 Her fleets that hide the billowy deep, they roam,
 And branching various, join the boundless main.

HENCE

HENCE too the Tagus swells his golden tide
 Serene and placid. Hence the oak-crown'd Thames
 Draws from deep urns remote his silver stream 730
 That bears Britannia's thunder. Hence the woods
 On Dee's delightful bank, where first the Muse
 Taught thy young hand to touch the tender strings,
 Though weak and trembling. Every gentler rill
 That waves spontaneous to the balmy gale, 735
 And feeds the blooming herbage, draws its source
 From these rude heights to Fancy's narrow ken,
 Heap'd in wild ruin o'er the world, and piled
 Horrid, to startle Thought's averted gaze.

YET not ev'n these alone proclaim the hand 740
 That form'd the mighty hills. But other use
 Displays to man, that when his Maker shaped
 The mass, then Wisdom rated th' unerring plan.

WHEN from the piercing blast that Winter breathes
 Thro' the chill air, the trembling Shepherd flies 745
 To reach his simple cot, that from the side
 Of some bleak hill commands the neighbouring dales;
 There shelter'd, warm and joyous, hears the North
 Howl o'er the cliff that screens him from its rage,

And

And careless prattles his amusive tale ; 750
 Knows he not then what shade the mountain yields,
 That o'er him hangs protective, and sustains
 The storm, that else had whelm'd his little hut,
 And turn'd him waste and naked to the wild ?

Nor one thus singly knows the ruling hand 755
 Of watchful Providence that cares for all.
 Whole countries shrouded ^a by surrounding heights,
 The mounds of Nature ! surer far than those
 By mimic art contriv'd ; amid the storm,
 Loud-bellowing o'er the distant rocks ; lie calm, 760
 Shelter'd, and opening to the Sun's mild beam ;
 As lightly shooting, thro' the sailing clouds
 It pours wide radiance, and illumines the scene.

^a *Whole countries shrouded, &c.*] The ingenious author of Anson's voyage observes, that the celebrated tranquillity of the Pacific Ocean is probably occasioned by the neighbourhood of the Andes, which cover an immense tract of country, and form a mound to repel the storms. This, he says, is the more credible, as, after losing sight of these mountains, they found themselves immediately in a climate wholly different, and, instead of the temperature of the Pacific Ocean, were exposed to the burning heat of the West-Indies.

CAST o'er this round and rolling world thine eye;
 This effort of Omnipotence! behold, 765
 How gradual-sloping ^w to the shore it bends;
 But swells slow-rising, where the inland wild
 Hears not the roaring main. Thus Wisdom shaped
 Its form, that o'er its hollow'd mass, the streams
 May sweep descending, as their tides convey 770
 Collected treasures to the race that roam
 O'er plains remote, and in the rushing floods
 Behold ideal Oceans; spreading wide
 O'er dales and meads, whose green embroider'd robe
 Skirt their fair banks with flowers; till wandering on, 775
 Their mingling currents swell the infatiate main.

^w *Behold, how gradual-sloping, &c.*] There is scarce any thing that indicates more sensibly the hand of Wisdom, than this admirable structure of the earth, by which the course of the rivers is so much facilitated, as they are constantly, though imperceptibly descending, till they join with the sea. This is a circumstance taken notice of by all naturalists who examine this subject. Je vois (says an author whom we have frequently quoted) toute la terre coupee par ces longs canaux. Je trouve par tout un mecanisme d'une structure dans ses dehors qui tend d'une maniere sensible a l'ecoulement des eaux. Dans tous les continens, & jusques dans les plus petites iles, il s'eleve de loin a loin des eminences plus ou moins grandes, depuis lesquelles le terrain s'abaisse en un pente insensible jusqu'a la mer. Spect. de la Nat. Entr. 18.

HENCE oft gay-glittering with the filmy dew
 Loose lie the broider'd dales; or copious fed
 With showers soft dropping from the hovering cloud
 That wraps the hills dark summit, (there convey'd 780
 By sure though secret influence) rejoice
 Beneath the dew of Heav'n, that sheds its balm
 Around, and genial warms the thirsty field.

THUS as the shores, whose rock-environed sides
 Repel the rushing deep, oft from the mass 785
 Of seas collected, drink refreshing showers:
 So where no flood extends a boundless breadth,
 Or breathes black vapours thro' the misty air;
 The hills * high-heaving, with attractive power
 By Nature's God infused, draw the light clouds * 790
 Afar

* *The hills—draw the light clouds.*] This, though it is certainly one of the principal uses of mountains, I do not remember to have seen particularly taken notice of by any of the writers on this subject. It is indeed agreed on all hands, that the mountains have some attractive quality, by which they arrest the vapours which fluctuate in the atmosphere; a truth, which on all occasions is confirmed by experience. Is it not therefore reasonable to suppose, that one great end for which they are scattered over the face of the globe, is, that by this power of attraction they may collect

Afar, and spread them o'er a waste of land,
Else parch'd, and scorching in the solar ray.

SUCH

fect the clouds which are perpetually arising from the sea, and, by spreading these over an inland country, supply it with a necessary proportion of rain? It is unquestionably by some expedient of this nature that this supply is regularly procured, in soils which are naturally dry and barren; and where the vapours exhaled from the earth are not of themselves sufficient to produce so much rain as the ground necessarily demands, to bring its productions to maturity. I can think only of two objections, which lie against this hypothesis. One of them is, that there are in the earth many countries apparently smooth and level, which are sufficiently well watered from the atmosphere without the benefit of mountains: the other is, that supposing the surface of the whole globe to be perfectly level, (as some authors imagine it to have been at the creation) yet the winds alone are sufficient to disperse the clouds over every part of it, and to convey the quantities of rain which may be proportioned to each of them. In answer to the former of these, it hath been already observed, that over the whole earth there must be some ascent, however imperceptible, betwixt the lands contiguous to the sea, and the middle countries which lie at a distance, in order to facilitate the descent of the rivers, which on a perfect level must overflow and stagnate. The only conclusion therefore which results from this remark, is, not that the hills are of no use in dispersing the vapours over inland and remote countries; but that the attraction from an ascent of this kind apparently imperceptible, must operate more universally, than it can do from a rugged and broken surface,

SUCH by the Sire of Heav'n the cloudy hills
 Were form'd, not wild to scare th' affrighted eye;
 Nor heap the world with ruin; nor depress

795

surface, by which the clouds are arrested in different places according to the direction of the winds, and the rains falling from them are therefore circumscribed and local. This is indeed true, and, instead of invalidating, serves to confirm our hypothesis. The other objection, that the winds would be sufficient to effectuate the above-mentioned purpose, though the surface of the earth was perfectly level, however plausible it may appear at first view, will yet vanish on a stricter enquiry. For not to insist upon one obvious consequence from this supposition, viz. that the whole mass of vapours arising from the mountains themselves, and from the currents which flow around them, is wholly lost (at least to the purpose of effectuating frequent and necessary supplies of rain upon particular occasions) not to dwell on this; the winds must in that case heap the clouds together, which, being attracted to no particular part of the earth more than another, would probably either break out in floods upon certain places, or would exhaust their stores at random, and before they arrived at countries very distant from the sea. On the contrary, in the present state of things, as soon as the vapours arising from the sea, the rivers, or from other causes, are floated in the atmosphere, the winds are ready to disperse the whole, and the contiguous eminencies are prepared by the Creator to arrest such of them in their passage as may be necessary to the benefit of particular places. Thus the whole process is regularly carried on, and a distribution is made, suitable in every respect to the ideas which we entertain of the power and wisdom of the Deity.

The

The heart of man, who marks their dizzy height
 Amazed : but still subservient to the end
 Of general good, to work the great design
 Of Wisdom infinite, though man's weak eye
 Marks not their use ; and as his moistening limbs 800
 Strain up the deep ascent, his murmuring mind
 Complains, and censures Heav'n's all-wise decree.

But thou perhaps with anxious view beheldst
 Yon deep Volcano ; saw'st the furling flame,
 The streaming sulphur, and the blackening cloud ; 805
 Nor knew'st why Heav'n ordain'd so dire a foe.

Know then, within Earth's all-involving womb,
 Where lies conceal'd the first rude draught of things,
 Are veins of living fire ; imprison'd air
 That bursts the solid rock ; wide-winding streams, 810
 That thro' the echoing cavern loudly roll,
 And form the smoaky sulphur ; pointed sands,
 That mix'd with strong bitumen, give the glow
 Of the deep ruby to the dazzling beam ;
 Or in the sapphire paint th' inverted orb 815
 Of Heav'n, or bid the spangling diamond tinge
 With lucid radiance Night's o'er shading gloom,

THESE wrought thro' Nature's fine alembic, lie
 Deep in the bowels of the cavern'd rock,
 Impregn'd with seeds of fire, that o'er the mass
 Diffusive spread; and when the struggling air,
 Pent up and straitned, works them into flame,
 All-wild and rapid, thro' the labouring earth
 They pour resistless; burst the solid cliffs;
 And thro' the yawning void that whelms at once
 The tumbling City, mount and melt in air.

MARK yon wide-spreading field, (a spacious plain
 Rose as he spoke in all the heightened bloom
 Of smiling Beauty!) see the mantling lawn
 Lies all serene before thee! Fruits, and flowers,
 And woods, and murmuring streams, and alleys green,
 Lost in wild mazes; and the blush of Spring
 O'er all diffused, to gild the beauteous scene
 With luxury unbounded. If the fire
 Lodg'd in the vaults below, had roll'd within,
 Nor found an Outlet; thro' the rumbling cave
 Loud storm had roar'd, and Earthquakes tore the frame,
 Th' harmonious frame above. Convulsive throws
 Had shook the Earth, and the perpetual sound
 Of subterraneous thunder stunn'd the ear;

And

And broke the form of Nature. But the hand
 Of Heav'n's Almighty fix'd yon rooted Hill;
 And scoop'd its womb, and cloathed its sides with fire;
 That thro' the vent prepared, th' ascending flame
 Might burst at once, nor circling thro' the mass, 845
 Tear with continual throws its shrinking veins.

HERE paused the Sage: a while the thoughtful mind
 Revolved his words, I mused, and thus replied.

“ Now clear'd from Passion's mist, I see what Good
 “ From seeming Evil springs. What once appear'd 850
 “ Wrong or unequal in the glorious work
 “ Of Wisdom, thro' a purer medium view'd,
 “ Assumes a nobler form, and points the Good
 “ Of All, as one great end that from her plan
 “ Results, and gradual rules the vast machine. 855
 “ Yet tell Benevolent, had Nature felt
 “ No change of varying seasons; was the air
 “ Pure from the taint of mildew, or the blast
 “ Of killing Pestilence; or did the earth
 “ Fair as it rose from Wisdom's forming hand, 860
 “ Retain no fuel in its veins, to swell
 “ Th' incumber'd mass, or shake its solid base,

" And pour destruction on its helpless sons :
 " Say, was the Cause, whence rise th' external ills
 " Of Whirlwind, Storm, Volcano, from the work 865
 " Removed ; though in its present structure, these
 " Combine to general good : then would not man
 " Taste higher bliss, than shifting from th' extreme
 " Of heat to cold, now freezing on the hill ;
 " Now panting from the sultry noon ; now caught 870
 " On the wild whirlwind's wing ; or treading light,
 " He knows when o'er Earth's tottering arch he reels,
 " That heaves beneath him ? From these natural ills
 " Exempt, his days were calm, serene and free."

WOULD'ST thou then (thus th' indignant Power resumed)
 New mould thy maker's work, reform the plan 876
 Wrought by unerring Wisdom ? Would'st thou claim,
 Weak, frail, and guilty as thou art ; for thee
 A paradise prepared ? A clime, that knows
 No storm, th' abode of man, whose passions break 880
 The bounds of right ; who triumphs in the eye
 Of Heav'n, to launch insulting on the stream
 Of Folly ; who contemns the Eternal's law ;
 Who to his maker says *v*, Depart, for Thee

v Who to his maker says, &c.] Job 21.

I know

I know not, nor desire? Say, dost thou spread 885
The lawn for Wolves, or bid the Villa rise,
To soothe the Lion's horrid heart, that throbs
Exulting o'er its prey? Nor think the charge
Too harsh; for to eternal Wisdom, Man
Deform'd by Passion, is a monster, wild 890
As that which roams the Lybian wastes; and joys
To drench his tusks in blood. Mark then the clime,
As temper'd to th' inhabitant. Behold
Thy mind, the mirror, where th' alternate change
Of calm and tempest shifting quick, reflect 895
The varying forms of Nature! kindling now
To rage, now boiling like the troubled sea,
Work'd by a whirlwind; madning like the wave,
That strikes its shaggy mound; or secret arm'd
With triple poison, as the gale that breathes 900
Thro' the dark air its brimstone-dropping wing,
And inly-wasting, withers as it flies.

YET still presumptuous, think'st thou that the Power
Who form'd the world, might suit to happier climes
The human frame; and harmonise the mind 905
To perfect concord, as the master tunes
The chords melodious of the warbling lyre,

To

To pour the stream of Musie? Know the thought
 Of that tremendous Sire, whose awful ken
 Involves the vast of Nature; ere this orb 910
 Was rent from Chaos, in wide reach disposed
 The mighty chain of things. The piercing glance
 Of Wisdom mark'd their natures, and display'd
 In gradual rank, the fair-ascending scale
 Of Beauty's rising tribes. Imperfect all, 915
 As from the Finite, length unmeasured runs
 To reach the Infinite. Yet in the chain
 Each link maintains its use; each part receives
 Proportion'd worth, and every movement rolls
 To work its proper end. What lies above 920
 Thyself, is veil'd from mortal ken; below,
 What towers to thee is open. Cast thine eye
 On lifeless matter. Mark th'ascending forms
 Of Beauty, varying from the bleeding bells
 Of yonder Amaranth that sweeps the ground; 925
 To the tall Cedar, on the topmost spire
 Of Lebanon, that rears its head sublime,
 And spreads its boughs to Heav'n. See in the tribe
 Of living forms, the gradual scale ascend
 From sensitive to animal; from brute 930
 To human. The fine plant, that from thy touch

Shrinks

Shrinks sensible, connects the filmy line
 To the small shell but just impregn'd with life,
 Where shut from harm as in a circling mound,
 Lives the lone 'Habitant. Thence rising slow 935
 Thro' Instinct's wide-revolving rounds, ascends
 The just progression; till the watchful dog,
 Sagacious, friendly, penetrating, joins
 His twilight circle to his Master's sphere,
 Where full-form'd Instinct drops, and Reason dawns. 940

If thus thro' Nature's wide extent, the forms
 Below thee vary, yet th' ascent in all
 By slow gradation rises; think'st thou then
 That Wisdom in her higher Works observes
 No similar proportion? From the ranks 945
 Below, exalt thy wondering gaze! Behold
 The Worlds that round yon central Sun revolve
 Harmonious! Each receives its just degree
 Of genial warmth, when near the fiery orb ^z
 It drinks his purest radiance as it wheels; 950
 Or sweeps in wider range, like thy fair Star
 Aurora! fann'd with cooler gales, that lies

^z Near the fiery orb, &c.] Mercury.

In temperated air : or distant, knows
 The change of seasons ^a, as the earth that feels
 The piercing blast of Winter : or remote, 955
 On Nature's utmost verge all-darksome rolls,
 And sees the pale sun light the lunar lamps ^b;

Or

^a *Or distant knows the change of seasons, &c.*] The gentlemen who patronize Dr. Burnet on Mr. Whiston's Theories, will perhaps observe, that the diversity of seasons is not an effect of the earth's distance from the sun; but that it results from the obliquity of its position. This however does not affect our present argument, that from the analogy of nature we have reason to conclude, that a regular progression takes place in all the works of the Creator; because without mentioning the disobedience of man, which rendered this alteration originally expedient, we may reply, that the world, and its inhabitants in their present state, occupy a particular place in the scale of creation, which renders it necessary that they should participate of those advantages and inconveniencies which are the effects of their situation. The disobedience of man taken in conjunction with this, vindicates the Deity from the imputation of injustice, for permitting these natural evils to take place, because it leads us to consider these as the punishment of sin.

^b *The pale sun light the lunar lamps, &c.*] If it should be objected to this reasoning, that the order of our planetary system, as the bodies which compose it are placed at different distances from the sun, answers very little end, because it is generally supposed that these worlds are uninhabited;

Or chilling freezes in his noon-day blaze.

Each in the separate sphere maintains its place;

Each

habited; I would reply, that nothing but the pride of man can tender such a supposition apparently reasonable. All the observations which have yet been made on the planetary worlds, tend to establish a probability on the opposite side of the question. Our earth has an atmosphere surrounding, and a moon attending her. The planet Jupiter, on whose moons the light of the sun must strike more faintly, has four of these secondary orbs revolving around him, in order to compensate this disadvantage. Saturn, at a still greater distance, is wholly encircled with a luminous ring, in which Cassini and Huygens have already discovered five moons, which throw their united radiance upon him during the night-season. It is beyond all question that Jupiter has an atmosphere, from the direction of which it has been concluded, that the axis of that planet is perpendicular to the ecliptic, which must produce an uniform season, and a perpetual equinox. To what purpose all this apparatus, obviously intended to make up for the natural disadvantages of situation, if these worlds are not inhabited? Has providence taken so much care to enlighten deserts, and placed moons around them, like that which is subservient to us, merely to gratify the eye of man, or to afford scope to his curiosity? Surely reason will not justify us in forming a conclusion of this nature. It is to no purpose to observe, that the inhabitants of these worlds must live in the extremities of heat or cold. These may be supported with ease, or with difficulty; according to the particular texture of their bodies, or the constitution of their atmosphere. In short, if these worlds have

Each keeps its rank in the progressive scale; 966
 To each impartial Thought assigns its bound;
 And Wisdom, plucking from the tree of life
 A bough that breathes ambrosia, balm, and myrrh;
 Bathes the rich fruitage in the Stygian wave
 That soils its bloom; then o'er her work extends 965
 The dropping branch, and says, "O World, be here
 " Thy share of good and ill!" Such from the birth
 Of Time th' Almighty spoke his great decree.

WOULD'ST thou then, for thy fingle good dissolve
 Th' unbounded harmony of all? Do'st thou 970
 Repine that Heav'n regardless of thy call
 Ordains not earth an Eden, nor exalts
 The Man to Angel? O th' insatiate grasp
 Of human hope! A copious shower extends
 The swelling river o'er its bed; the sea, 975

have their annual revolutions about the same common center, their moons, their atmospheres, and their light, in the same manner as we are possessed of them; is it not pride, and not reason, which leads us to think, that they differ from us in the only circumstance for which advantages of this kind can be conferred by Wisdom, that is, for the benefit of inhabitants?

Big with the rushing tides might burst its mound :
The creeping fill from deeper urns supplied,
May rise an Ocean. But the pride of man
Extends to infinite. With all around
Displeased, on Fancy's neck he drops the reins.
She loose and kindling whirls him on her wing.
He mounts the vault of stars ! he grasps the bolt
Of Heaven's Eternal ! on empyreal air
He fails ! she leaves him : down the Pigmy falls,
A worm of earth, and crawls along the ground,
Giddy ; the sport of reptiles, and their prey !

Know then whate'er in Nature's ample field
The scanty ken of thy revolving eye
Hath mark'd as Evil ; in the general plan
Is just, is beauteous : the conjoining parts,
Though each when separate, like a single limb
In some proportion'd shape, appears deform'd,
As viewed apart ; yet when exactly wrought
In the full work, an heightned grace assumes,
And aids the perfect symmetry of all.

YET not o'er Nature spread the general traits
Of imperfection. On some happier climes,

The

The hand of Heav'n hath shower'd its richest spoils,
 Profuse of bounty. Though the juicy grape
 Tempts not the lip of Luxury, the pine 1000
 Feels not the scorching Sun, nor on the bough
 Hangs clothed in mantling gold, and ripe to taste,
 The mellow Orange; yet their plains can boast
 A nobler produce. In yon blissful isle,
 Gay plenty reigns! Ascending as he spoke 1005
 From the blue deep, to my transported gaze
 Rose the white cliffs of Albion. Hail beloved
 Of Heav'n! (with joy exclaim'd th' enraptured Sire)
 Britannia hail! O! from the world disjoin'd,
 As Nature's hand had form'd the soft retreat 1010
 Of happiness and love! No fevering sun
 Blasts thy gay meads: no deep Volcano boils
 With inward fire; nor thro' the cave beneath,
 Walks the dire Earthquake. The tremendous shock,
 That from their loose base heaves the works of man, 1015
 Just vibrates ^c on thy bosom; as the voice

^c *The tremendous shock — just vibrates, &c.] This alludes to the Earth-
 quakes in 1757, which did so much harm on the continent, and were
 slightly felt in some parts of Britain.*

Of distant thunder, moves the trembling ground,
 And murmurs in the air. Thy fields rejoice
 With chearful plenty. On yon waving plain,
 I see the Goddess walk! her loosened robe
 Floats on the gale redundant; on her cheek,
 In full luxuriance swells the blushing Spring,
 And scents her breath with myrrh. Mark how she rears
 Her horn aloft and liberal; o'er the field
 Pours all her treasures. Man's enlivened soul,
 And all the groves are transport. Hark the voice
 Of Music warbles from the bough! The hind
 Feels his heart leaping as he looks around,
 And Joy's bright ray bursts o'er the kindling mind.

THESE are the blessings Heav'n's all-bounteous hand
 Showers on her favourite isle. Thrice happy they,
 Who know their worth; and, kindling at the view,
 With love, with gratitude, adore the Power
 Who shaped this wondrous frame, and wrought its parts
 To such perfection. Nor less beauteous form'd
 His moral plan. But this to trace at large,
 Requires a fitter season: the flow sun
 Already sinks behind yon crimson'd cloud,
 And gives the world to night. Quick as he said,

The landscape languish'd: from the gazing eye,
Groves, woods and lawns, and visionary bowers,
Immediate fled; and nought remain'd around,
But the bleak mountain, and the peaceful dale.

THE END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

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P R O V I D E N C E.

B O O K II.

R E V E A L E D R E L I G I O N.

YET let the muse extend her towering wing,
 To roam the vast of Nature ! Lo ! what scenes
 By man yet unexplored, unfold to rouse
 Her search ! to tremble in her ardent eye !
 To tempt her flight sublime, as o'er the world
 She soars, and from her airy height surveys
 The fate of empire * ; and the shifting schemes

Of

* *From her airy height surveys the fate of empire.*] In the controversy about the necessity and usefulness of Revelation, which has employed so many pens, the only question which requires to be answered in canvassing the subject of Providence, relates to the time at which it was conferred

Of human thought, successive as they swim,
Buoying, or lost in Time's o'erwhelming wave.

on mankind. The advocates of infidelity demand, with some appearance of reason, why a dispensation so highly important, and so indispensibly necessary to the benefit of man, should have been postponed to the distance of four thousand years from the creation; and for what reason Christianity, which became an useful institution immediately upon the Fall, yet does not appear to have been considered by the Deity as necessary, till the reign of Tiberius. Without examining particularly the state of the Jewish nation, which might tend to illustrate this difficulty; the author endeavours to prove in this book, that one great end for which Providence permitted this delay to take place, was, that man might be convinced by repeated experiments of the insufficiency of reason to discover any consistent theological system; and consequently of the expediency and necessity of Revelation. In order to this, successive views of the state of the world are exhibited in the first ages of simplicity, under the future rudiments of culture, and at last in the happier æra of its highest improvement; and the enquiry still proceeds, whether the human mind, at any of these periods, was able to discover a rational system of religion: and how far its improvement in this respect corresponded to its progress in the invention of Arts, or in the researches of Science. The consequence resulting from this enquiry is at last fairly deduced; and it appears with that force which every series of reasoning acquires, when it either proceeds upon principles which are evidently just, or consists of facts which are universally obvious.

Not

Not idly-curious her light glance pervades
The plans of Wisdom; with no stranger's eye
She comes to wonder on the solemn scenes:
Or prying search for labyrinths, where the field
Is open, rich, accessible. — But free,
Impartial, just, she scans the mighty themes;
And paints them genuine as they rose to view.

'Twas where a plain, far from the haunt of man,
Spread its green bosom to the evening ray,
Meek Quiet's peaceful walk; the smiling scenes
Had lured me wandering on; the stream of thought
In that calm hour to meditation due,
Flow'd on the soul spontaneous; as the breeze
On the smooth current of some limpid rill
Steals o'er the ruffled wave. A dusky wood
O'erlook'd the field, and full in site oppos'd,
Lower'd the bleak mountain; o'er the varying Lawns,
Crown'd with gay verdure; whence the list'ning ear
Thrill'd to the music of the tuneful choirs,
That stream'd sweet-warbling o'er the vale; or heard
Remote the deep's loud murmur, like the voice
Of torrents from afar. Sequester'd here,

Musing I sat, and in thy mirror view'd
 Fair History; beheld the towering piles
 Of grandeur fallen, or call'd the forms august
 Of heroes from the tomb. The mighty chiefs, 35
 I saw them bustling o'er the human scene,
 Light as the glittering tribe, elate, that sport
 On summer's dazzling beam; till life's short noon
 Flapsed, and lo! the melancholy Eve
 That shades their glories in the Dust! What boon, 40
 The prize of virtue paid them! Did thy worth,
 Intrepid Decius, from the Samnite steel,
 Screen the devoted heart? Did Scipio quell
 The tide of passion^b, and release the fair,
 Blooming and spotless, to her lover's arms; 45
 Or snatch from Hannibal's proud crest the wreath
 Of victory, to find the sons of Rome

^b *Did Scipio quell the tide of passion, &c.*] This beautiful story is well known. History has not preserved the name of the lady. Her lover was Allucius, a prince of Celtiberia. The generous Roman, by voluntarily surrendering her to the arms of another, and by bestowing her ransom upon him for a portion, obtained a victory as much superior to his other conquests, as the triumph of reason over the passions, exceeds the acquisition of territory by which the latter are indulged.

Just to his deeds? Ah no!—Amid the gloom
 Of solitude he pined^c; scarce from the grasp
 Of fury rescued, indignation swell'd
 His manly heart, and grief slow-mining loosed
 The props of life, and gave him to the tomb.

SUCH Tully^d was thy fate, and Brutus, thine!
 The ghastly head low-rolling in the dust;
 The tongue to satiate female frenzy torn;
 The bleeding heart yet reeking, spoke the end
 Of Eloquence and Virtue. Scarce a tear

^c *Amid the gloom of solitude he pined, &c.*] This great man, by far the most eminent whom Rome produced in the most virtuous ages of the Republic; prosecuted by two despicable tribunes, at the instigation of Cato the Censor, was compelled to retire to his country-seat at Linternum near Naples; where, in the forty-eighth year of his age, he died of grief for the ingratitude of his country.

^d *Such Tully, &c.*] It would be needless to take particular notice of the deaths of Cicero and Brutus. The head of the former was received with smiles and exultation by Anthony; whose wife Fulvia satiated her fury by tearing out the tongue, and by piercing it with a bodkin. The exit of Brutus excited the same illiberal triumph in the soul of Octavius, the most vindictive and cruel of the triumvirs,

Embalm'd

Embalm'd their urns, triumphant Vice beheld
 With smiles their exit; and oppression rais'd
 Her scourge to punish, where the feeling heart
 Swell'd in soft moisture to the pitying eye.

O! WRECK'D, and dubious* of a life to come!

What trophies graced the present! Heav'n withheld
 From these superior light, left in the maze
 Of Doubt to wander, by the twilight ray
 Of glimmering Nature led: while toil and pain
 Mark'd their long course with woe; and Death's pale eye
 Terrific frown'd them into nought. Did these
 Than we more guilty, by superior crimes
 Insult th' Omnipotent, that Truth's fair form
 Unveil'd to us, was from the dark research
 Of cool Philosophy in shades immured?
 Whence then the palm by every voice conferr'd?
 Whence the sweet lay that wantons in their praise?
 Why o'er soft Pity's pallid cheek descends
 The tear that weeps their doom, that says they lived
 A virtuous few! that mourns them as they fell,

* O! wreck'd, and dubious, &c.] See this subject more fully treated in
 the note on line 1007.

The

The victims of ingratitude, or zeal
For public honour? yet the beam of heav'n
Illumed not Reason's path, nor led the mind
To see the Maker^f in his work pourtray'd

Ont,
Wrought by celestial art. To these its charms

^f *To see the Maker, &c.*] The Polytheism of the Heathens, and the actions which they ascribe to the supreme Being, have always been considered as evidences of the insufficiency of human reason to discover what relates to the Deity. We ought not indeed to believe, that the fables of the poets, by which the majesty and perfections of God are so much debased, were received as truths by the philosophical sects; but we ought to remember at the same time, that the opinions of a few speculative philosophers, whose minds were cultivated and expanded by science, are no proper criterions by which we are to judge of the perfection to which human nature is capable of arriving. The standard of our ideas on this subject, must be the received opinions of this matter which prevailed universally in the world; and these were big with absurdity, superstition, and folly. Even the philosophers themselves, on many occasions, give a sanction to the prepossessions of the vulgar; and, assisted as they were in their researches by Revelation, appear to be sensible of the deficiency of nature. Thus Plato, in his discourse on the immortality of the soul, and on the attributes of the Deity, expresseth his desire to obtain some tradition; and narrates a few of those which had been brought down to him. In the former, he proposeth to collect the best arguments he can think of, to prove the immortality of the soul: — *ἡ μὴ τις δύναμις ἀσφαλεστον,*

One perfect, infinite, nor shew'd the climes
 Of pure ethereal pleasure, for the blest
 Prepar'd, nor to th' enlighten'd view display'd
 The form of moral Beauty, as it swells
 In full proportion to the mental gaze,
 Wrought by celestial aid. To these its charms
 Appear'd not. Heav'n on their degenerate sons
 Conferr'd its noblest boon, when from the gulph
 Of furgy Chaos, where the goddess lay

και ανωδυνωλεσαν, και βεβαιωλεσαν οχηματις η ΔΟΥΝΟΝ ΘΕΙΟΥ ΤΙΝΟΣ
 διαπορευομεναι, Phæd. In his Philebus he expressly acknowledgeth,
 that his doctrine of one God and many natures, was taken from the an-
 cients, who were better than their successors; and on that account,
 ανωδυνωλεσαν, i. e. lived nearer the Gods, or were better ac-
 quainted with their councils. What an imperfect account of the divine
 nature does this philosopher exhibit in his Symposium? where (probably
 from some imperfect tradition he had received relating to a Mediator) he
 says, that there are Demons of a middle order, who make the gods and
 men reciprocally acquainted with affairs relating to either; as if the om-
 niscience of the Deity did not render such an expedient utterly useless and
 improper. This, however it must be owned, is very different from those
 noble and exalted ideas of God which he exhibits on other occasions; and
 which are agreeable to the descriptions given of Him in the writings of
 inspiration. See his Politic, a. fin.

Wrapt in black clouds; He bad eternal Truth
Rise to the day: She heard, and to his call
Obedient rose: Her beauty-beaming eye,
Fair as thy ray, Aurora, when it scares
The growling lion from his prey; dispell'd
Th' involving shade, her magic touch dissolv'd
The veil of Error; lighten'd the dim search
Of dark Philosophy; and shew'd the MIND
That form'd, supports, and guides this mighty frame;

'Twas all mysterious; and weak Reason sought
In vain the cause, why wrapt from mortal view,
The glorious ages, fam'd for noble deeds;
For public virtue fam'd; mark'd not the Power
That beam'd benignant on a meaner train;
Thy race proud Luxury! why thus the hand
Of Bounty partial in its gifts, bestows
On One, the godlike boon requir'd by All;
To All alike expedient. From this scene,
To higher objects rais'd; the musing mind
Revolved in melancholy thought, the rise,
The fall of empire. Persia's domes f. blime,
Thy piles, proud Egypt, and Assyria's towers
Rais'd in high triumph o'er the waste of Time;

Where

Where are they?—Hark! in Fancy's starting ear,
 (What time the wan Ghost roams his nightly round :)
 Slow from the broken arch, resounds the voice
 Of shrieking ravens thro' the cheerless wild.

So fall thy plans, Ambition! And the race
 Who form'd them, thro' long-lingering ages left
 In Ignorance and Darkness, to the vale
 Of deep Oblivion sunk, nor hoped a dawn.

“ Thus then (long musing ask'd th' indignant mind)
 “ Thus is bright Reason's heav'n-illumin'd ray,
 “ That spark of Deity debas'd? Did HE,
 “ Who gave the nobler boon, that lifts the man
 “ To kindred angels near;—Did he confer
 “ A scanty share, unequal to the task
 “ Assign'd; then left him wandering in the dark
 “ Of Nature?—No. The Power by culture form'd,
 “ Knew its great Parent; traced th' ascending scale
 “ Of things progressive to their mighty Cause;
 “ Beheld the Maker & as he sits sublime

“ High

“ Beheld the Maker, &c.] That the Heathens formed the most sublime

" High on his starry throne, and knew the soul
 " Immortal ^h as its cause. Then had not man,
 " Left to himself, unveil'd the sacred Truths
 " Reveal'd, nor sought a Guide to point his way?"

As thus I spoke, lo thro' the still retreat
 Slow moved the radiant pair!—The sky-rapt Power
 Of Contemplation eyed me, and began.

STILL hopest thou restless, of th' Eternal's ways
 To judge; still seek'st to fathom the immense
 Of Wisdom?—Far as Reason's ruling hand
 Permits Conjecture's groping search to stray;
 I blame not, but will aid thee. Where thou leavest

ideas of the power and immensity of the Creator, when they considered him separately from the inferior Deities, is a truth which will be sufficiently obvious to any person who peruseth the works of their poets, particularly the Iliad.

^h Knew the soul immortal, &c.] Though we shall shew afterwards, that the wisest Heathens were far from being certain of this truth; yet it hath been often and justly observed, that the belief of future existence forms a part of the creed of all nations, the most ignorant and barbarous, as well as the most intelligent and civilized.

His

80 P R O V I D E N C E

His path, to rove in Doubt's perplexing maze;
My care extends not.—Now exalt thy sight,
And mark the smiling scene that bursts to view.

GRACEFUL He said:—when lo, th' attending Power
Struck with her magic rod the swelling lawn,
And work'd a new Creation! The low plain
Stretch'd to a field immense, where sportive walk'd
The fair-robed Summer.—O'er her glowing form
Harmonious, flow'd the flower-embroider'd vest,
Girt with a mantling zone;—her lucid eye
Beam'd sweetly-radiant; and her cheek outvied
The cherry's deepening bloom. Soft on her lips
Sat all the laughing Loves; and in her hair,
Spread o'er the throbbing bosom, half-dislosed,
And swelling to the breeze; the Graces play'd
Luxuriant.—Round, the bleating flocks were ranged,
A harmless train, that cropp'd the flowery turf,
Or quaff'd the silver rill. In frolic sport,
All-light they wanton'd; for no mound restrain'd
Their airy pastime; and the savage tribe
Sought not their peaceful cot.—A distant lake¹,

165

That

¹ *A distant lake, &c.*] The lake Stymphalis in Arcadia, where this

That swell'd its blue wave from the thymy hills,
 Gleam'd thro' the loosened grove. As yet the birds ^k,
 Whose wings expanded veil'd the noon-day Sun,
 Stain'd not its tide. Not far the simple hut,
 Sweet haunt of Innocence and Peace! o'erlaid 170
 With slender osiers, and the flexile shrub,
 Chequer'd the rural landskip. O'er the field
 Roved the young Shepherds, smiling in the prime
 Of Life, and near were seen the spotless Fair
 Crown'd with the herbage of the broider'd mead, 175
 That shower'd its spoils around them. Beauty beam'd
 In every look, and on each cheek the bloom
 Of rosy youth, delightful as it glow'd,
 With soft enchantment stole th' enraptured eye.

scene is supposed to lie; which was contiguous to the city, and to the hills of that name.

^k *As yet the birds.*] The Stymphalian birds, who haunted this lake, and infested the country, are well known; as it was one of the labours of Hercules thoroughly to subdue them. The fertility of Arcadia, and the simple manners of its first inhabitants, render it peculiarly proper to the end for which this description is introduced.

RAPT in sweet transport as I mark'd the scene 180
 All balmy-breathing :— Hail, ye happy seats
 (I thus exclaim'd) ye gentle tribes, that taste
 The cup of Pleasure, by the baleful seeds
 Of Care untainted ! may no Syren charm
 Your step from Nature's open court, to stray 185
 Amid the wilds of Passion ! may you walk,
 Thus blest, thus harmless, till superior Powers
 Once more descending to th' abodes of man,
 Mark a new Eden, and transported join
 To mortal strains the high seraphic lay ! 190

THUS from the feeling heart with joy inspired,
 The stream of rapture flow'd.—The Power of thought
 Smiled with consenting mein. Blest is the man
 Who hears the voice of Nature ; who, retired
 From bustling life, can feel the gladening beam, 195
 The hope that breathes of Paradise. Thy deeds,
 Sweet Peace, are music to th' exulting mind :
 Thy prayer, like incense wafted on the gale
 Of morning, spreads ambrosia, as the cloud
 Of spicy sweets perfumes the whispering breeze 200
 That scents Arabia's wild.—Yon rural train,
 In careless indolence reclin'd ; the field,

Gay with the hues of Summer; the loose herds
 That roam the pasture, and diffused o'er all,
 The smile of Innocence, the guileless blush
 Of simple Nature;—let these scenes recal
 The prime of days, when in its vernal bloom,
 Earth robed in verdure, from the Maker's hand
 Came warm and genial; and her peaceful sons
 Knew not the lore of Luxury.—Serene
 Thou see'st them; various in the rural task
 Employ'd; or sporting o'er the lilled lawn,
 Or stretch'd at ease beneath the mantling bough,
 Hymning the great Creator. Happy tribe!
 But perfect Happiness to man's frail race
 Pertains not.—Drink instruction, and be wise.

He spoke;—and sudden as I gazed around,
 Bright in the glittering East¹ a form appear'd
 Divinely-beauteous, whose rich plumage gleam'd
 Gay to the dazzling sun: beyond the race

¹ *Bright in the glittering East, &c.*] The reader will observe, that this allegorical Personage is said to come from the East; as it was from that part of the world, alternately conquered by the Greeks and the Romans, that the Luxury and Effeminacy which finally ruined both these nations was originally derived.

Of mortals fair, beyond the human size
Raised, with superior dignity she trod;
And seem'd a Goddess from celestial climes
To man descending, that her lenient hand
Might point the path to Happiness. Her head 225
A crown encircled; o'er her limbs a robe
Floated in easy majesty; a star
Beam'd from her brow; and on her arm she bore
A polish'd mirror, where the forms of things
Reflected, with transcendent lustre flamed. 230
Age in the glass beheld its wrinkled front,
Smooth as the cheek of Hebe. Beauty shone
With angel radiance; and Deformity,
(Had shrunk Deformity been there) had vied
With Helen struggling in the arms of love 235
Sweetly reluctant. Such the Goddess shone.

Nor long she trod the plain, when gathering round,
The rural tribe yet innocent, beheld
Her form with wonder; eyed her purple plumes,
Her crown, her stature, and her magic glass, 240
Curious, amazed, delighted.—But when near,
She held the mirror up, and shew'd the face,
That glow'd celestial, soft as Fancy paints

Bright

Bright Venus orient from the silver wave;
 The throng obsequious to the powerful charm, 245
 Pursued her step, nor knew that all the scene
 Was false and hollow; nor behind the veil
 Discern'd Temptation; till she led them on,
 Where robed in vivid green, a meadow spread
 Its velvet mantle to the sun. All wild 250
 They rush'd along, till in the secret snares
 Spread o'er the smiling lawn, their slippery feet
 Befet, the Fiend secured them as her prey.

Lost then at once were all the native charms
 Of tender Innocence; the heart no more 255
 Whisper'd its dictates to the simple tongue;
 But smooth Deceit, familiar in the robe
 Of Virtue, then first taught the gentle smile
 To veil the rankling thought. Caught in the net
 Of Vice, debilitating Sloth unnerved 260
 Each manly effort; and Corruption, sure
 As some dark Miner, sapp'd the mounds of Truth;
 And gave the throng to wanton o'er the mead
 Enlarged, and screen'd from sight the powerful chains
 Unfelt, that held them in the Tyrant's power. 265

Now mark (thus serious spoke the hoary fire)
 How vain the boast of Reason, that presumes
 Its powers adequate to disclose the truths
 Revealed by Wisdom.—To themselves thou saw'st
 Yon tribes abandon'd, free to chafe their path
 On Nature's common, as the judging mind
 Approved or censured from impartial view.
 Whence then by Passion's lawless arm subdued,
 Thus unresisting fall they? Why repress'd
 Before Temptation's guileful glance, subside
 The voice of Reason? His deep-searching eye,
 Had seen the fraud of yon deceitful glass,
 Had warn'd the throng to shun th' insidious snare,
 Had kept them innocent, didst thou describe
 His sphere with truth —But how this leading Guide
 Shields the firm thought from Pleasure's gilded lure,
 Thou seest; unequal to the task, he shrinks

m *Why repress'd, &c.*] The reader will observe, that though there is some allegorical description blended with this story, yet the principal fact is strictly true. The Arcadians were early invited to pastoral life by the richness and fertility of their pasturage; they became afterwards a martial and intrepid people, as Herodotus particularly attests, Hist. lib. i. and they were at last enervated by the Luxury which spread universally among their countrymen.

Back from the field, or yielding, takes the side
Of Passionⁿ, or faint-whispering, if his voice
Dissuades from peril; yet its sound unheard, 285

ⁿ *Yielding takes the side of Passion.*] This unequal poise of Reason and the Passions, is a truth which will stand in need of no proof to any person who is attentive to the operations of his own mind. The account which Cicero gives of this matter from his own experience, will be confirmed by universal testimony. Speaking of the errors which are imbibed in youth, he subjoins: Cum vero accedit eodem quasi maximus quidam magister Populus, atque omnis undique ad vitia consentiens multitudo, tum plane inficimur opinionum pravitate, a Naturaque desciscimus; — & optimus quisque veram illam gloriam expetens, quam unam Natura maxime inquirat, in summa inanitate versatur: consecraturque nullam eminentem effigiem virtutis, sed adumbratam imaginem gloriæ. Tusc. Quæst. lib. iii. How this description of human Nature agrees with what he says afterwards, of the wise man keeping his mind in a perfect and uninterrupted equilibrium, I cannot so readily discover. This admired Ancient has probably been led into trains of sentiment apparently opposite, by neglecting on some occasions to consider, that whatever difference we may observe in the characters and actions of men; yet the radical and discriminating qualities of the human mind are characteristic in some measure of every individual; and a man, with his passions and reason in constant equilibrium, would be an object as extraordinary as the Arabian Phoenix.

Amid the tumult of the madning mind
 Neglected dies; as when the thunder roars,
 The gentle murmur of the purling rill
 Strikes not retentive on the thrilling ear.

SINCE then unfit from smooth Temptation's smile 290
 To save its Votaries, in the trying hour
 Decoy'd by Pleasure; since his feeble glance
 Discerns not Vice behind the mantling veil
 Of borrowed charms; or dimly seen, his voice
 Detains not from the chace:—Is Reason then 295
 Thus weak, to nobler work adequate, bold
 To search th' Eternal in his work, or known
 In Truth's strait path to guide the restive mind;
 When sway'd by Fancy in his choice, or duped
 By Passion in his pursuit?—Let thy thought 300
 Weigh the full proof, and pondering judge the whole.

He ceased;—and by superior Power o'erawed
 I stood, and pausing, thus at last replied.

“GREAT Power, whose sight can pierce the deepening cloud
 “That wraps the thought of Wisdom; at thy feet 305

“Behold

" Behold the Child of Earth, prompt to declare
 " Whate'er weak Reason whispers to excuse
 " His kindred worms, frail as the vernal flower
 " Cropt by the hand of Time, and form'd to die.

" SAY then, when man from Virtue's sacred path 310
 " First verged to Folly's devious road, inticed
 " By strong Temptations, by the thrilling strain
 " Of Pleasure syren-tongued,—say, had the beams
 " Of Knowledge then unmask'd the front of Vice,
 " And shew'd her haggard shape? Had then the hand 315
 " Of grey Experience chalk'd the upland path,
 " On which flow Judgment with retorted eye
 " Oft stands, and looks behind? Or were the train
 " Void of the Guardians, whose protection screens
 " The haunt of Innocence from ill, exposed 320
 " To every Fiend, whose subtle voice deludes
 " Th' unwary wanderer to his secret snare?"

WONDERING I stopp'd; for to my prompt excuse
 The Sire rejoin'd not; but the magic wand
 Of Fancy waving, rais'd a brighter scene. 325

HIGH

High o'er broad lawns with broidered vestare gay,
 Where Nature's liberal hand had shower'd profuse
 Her richest treasures, and the young-eyed Spring
 Walk'd in loose luxury; we mark'd sublime,
 A spacious Theatre, whose round inclosed 330
 Proud Fanes, the boast of Science; Obelisks
 That touch'd the blue horizon; towering domes
 Piled in rude grandeur; and the dizzy height
 Of sky-topt pyramids, whose steepy spires
 O'erlooked a waste of Empire. 'Twas in all, 335
 A mighty City; round whose ample skirts
 A circling terras ran, broad, firm, and strong,
 To stand the dash of torrents. From the brow
 Of a steep hill, we view'd the scattering throngs
 That roam'd at large. Some from the terras' height 340
 Breathed the cool breeze, whose lily-scented wing
 Perfumed the ambient air: some o'er the mead
 Wanton'd in easy indolence, and cull'd
 The spoils of Summer; while a Few retired
 Sat on a Tower's proud top, emboss'd around 345
 With mystic Figures; and in thought elate,
 Mark'd the declining sun; describ'd the course
 Of planetary orbs; and when the ray
 Of shy Aurora tinged the glowing east,

Eyed

Eyed the first beam ° that gilds the morning star, 350
And view'd its course along the brightning skies;

Not far a River, o'er its pebbled bed,
Roll'd a majestic stream; along its bank
Bloom'd the fair herbage of the mantling lawn,
Whose living hues illumed th' unbounded scenes 355
With rich variety: spontaneous glow'd
In gay assemblage, all the blushing tribe
Whose forms still varying crown the smiling year.

CHARM'D as I look'd, bewilder'd Thought survey'd
This scene of wonders bursting on its view, 360
Perplex'd; nor knew to clear th' entangling maze.
Chief on the Figures P dwelt my dubious search

In

° Eyed the first beam, &c.] By the morning star here is not meant the planet Venus, which usually goes under that name, but the Dog-star; from whose appearance, when it first rose above the horizon, the Egyptian philosophers estimated the plenty or barrenness of the succeeding season.

P Chief on the Figures, &c.] The Egyptians, who applied themselves early to the study of Philosophy, invented this method of communicating knowledge,

In deep suspense, and scann'd their mystic shapes;
 Their parts incongruous, where the wither'd hand
 Of bent Deformity had cast the moulds, 365
 And wildly freak'd with Beauty. Strow'd o'er all,
 These Forms unseemly rouz'd th' enquiring mind;

knowledge, probably as being best adapted to the selfish purpose of confining it to a Few. It was impossible when the God Mythras was represented by the Egyptians and Persians, sometimes with the head of a lion and the body of a man, sometimes with a serpent twined about him, sometimes with a flaming torch, and at others, in the habit of an High-Priest: — that the vulgar of these nations should comprehend the doctrines which were veiled in this manner, and were conveyed so darkly to the mind, that the research of Science is bewildered in attempting to account for them. See Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 507. Galis Court of the Gent, vol. i. Le Pluche Hist. du Ciel. Pass. In succeeding ages, when principles began to be established, and regular systems to be deduced from them, this method of propagating Science became vague, uncertain, and unintelligible to the bulk of mankind, from the multitude of objects which were to be illustrated. The Egyptian learning therefore, which was at first conveyed by hieroglyphical symbols, was then partly preserved in the ancient manner, by being inscribed on pillars erected for that purpose; and was partly committed to writing, and consigned to the custody of the Priests. Pythagoras at last became acquainted with this hieroglyphical learning, and transplanted it into Greece. See Strab. lib. xvii. and Diogen. Laert. de vit. Pythag.

And

And couch'd some truth mysterious. The short glance
Of mist-eyed Reason darken'd as it view'd;
Nor Fancy's lightning-beam could pierce the veil. 370

WHILE thus wild pastime o'er th' inviting scenes
Amusive roam'd;—lo, from his secret cell,
Up rose the River-Genius! In his hand
A trident waved, and o'er his form sublime
Floated the mantling azure. On a car 375
Of pearl, inlaid with shells, whose polish shone
Resplendent to the sun; led by the train
Of sporting Naiads, sat the godlike Power;
His blue locks waving to the fluttering breeze
That wanton'd as he came. Gay Plenty near, 380
Shook her bright wings, and eyed the laughing mead
With smiles askance, and o'er the landskip held
Her horn redundant; all the blushing year
With rich luxuriance blossom'd in her smile.

He stood;—and sudden in the swelling tide 385
Plunged his broad trident. From its bottom turn'd,
The working current boil'd. Not long its bank
Repres'd the stream, but rising o'er the mound,

It swept, a deluge, o'er the shrinking lawns;
 And roll'd promiscuous on its wave, the spoils
 That crown'd the smiling year. Its banks o'erspread,
 Full on the City pour'd the gushing stream,
 And shook its circling terras. Wide around
 It spread, and whelming wraps the broad champain,
 Far as the keen eye stretch'd its boundless view.

[*Wide around it spread.*] In this description of the Nile overflowing, the author has considered his work as a poem, in which it is necessary to bring as many objects as possible into one view, rather than as an historical detail, in which the order of Nature is exactly followed. Thus the inundation of this river, and its consequences, as far as these are connected with the present subject, are collected into one description, though history informs us, that this process goes forward very gradually. The overflowing of the Nile begins about the summer solstice; and the river, through the three succeeding months, continues to rise to the height of about sixteen cubits, when the canals are opened, and the waters are dispersed over Upper and Lower Egypt. After that time it decreases as slowly, and leaves the country covered with slime, and fitted for the purposes of Agriculture. The reader may see this curious subject more particularly treated than we can do in this note, by Herodot. lib. ii. Diod. Sicul. lib. i. Ammian. Marcell. lib. xxii. &c. among the Ancients; and by Thevenot and Lucas, among the modern Travellers.

WITHIN,

Within, the voice of tumult and amaze
 Was heard discordant; for the swarming throng
 Rush'd o'er the street; some from the shelter'd wall
 To see the copious tides, to mark the field
 Just shrinking from the sight! or the rude rock,
 Half-lost and half-projected o'er the waves,
 O'erlook the mighty ruin! Some intent,
 With eager hope explored the rising stream,
 And search'd its depth: thence kindling Fancy view'd
 The distant Autumn, saw the forward step
 Of laughing Ceres, or aghast, beheld
 Where pale-lip'd Famine, from her baleful wing,
 Shook livid poison on the blasted year.

Most sought the sacred Fane. The sacred Fane
 With open porch received the solemn throng
 That call'd their God — But starting with amaze,
 What sudden horror thrill'd the darting thought!
 When for that God, whose thunder rends the skies;
 Whose glance is lightning, and whose arm sublime
 Controuls the vast of Nature: when for Him
 Unknown,—the Brute stood bellowing!—In the Fane,
 Superb of structure, lodg'd the lordly Bull;
 And stared, affrighted at the prostrate train

That

That bow'd before his shrine! with awe-check'd hope
 Approaching! and with pious fervor warm,
 Imploring aid!—Grim Superstition then
 Obtain'd his noblest triumph; and elate,
 Chain'd Reason to his car.—Aghast I gazed
 With silent wonder, till Resentment loosed
 The struggling thought, and gave the voice to flow.

“ Thus then absorb'd is Truth's meridian ray?
 “ Thus stoops th' Almighty's image to the shrine
 “ Of groveling Instinct? then how vain is man!
 “ Whence then the judging Power by Heav'n bestow'd?
 “ Whence weak Philosophy thy boasted sway?
 “ Why hears the mind appall'd the bold reproach
 “ Of Heav'n's Vicegerent? Why the great command
 “ That once conferr'd Dominion?—Yet not all
 “ Thus meanly bend; thus from his glorious sphere,
 “ Pull that internal sun, that lights the soul,
 “ And quench his radiant beam.—But say what men,
 “ What sons of Night and Ignorance are these?”

To this the Sire unmoved. Thou seest display'd
 The Land of Nile, the fair illumined clime,
 Mother of Wisdom! where Philosophy

First stretch'd his eagle-thought : whence the pale dawn
Of Science ' o'erth' enlighten'd nations shone.
Lo where proud Memphis' mighty towers display'd,

Stand

Whence the pale dawn of Science, &c.] Though it is not wholly evident, that the Greeks derived the first rudiments of learning from Egypt, as Cadmus, who introduced letters, was a Phœnician ; yet it is certain that their philosophical and mythological systems were originally founded upon the knowledge, which was acquired by the persons who travelled in that country. Thus Diogenes Laertius informs us, that Pythagoras, while he resided in Egypt, was made acquainted with that secret learning, which was concealed from the vulgar of their own country, and from the foreigners of others. He returned instructed in all the wisdom of Egypt ; and communicated the knowledge he had acquired, to his countrymen. We have reason to believe that the Greeks derived their skill in navigation from the Phœnicians, who were a maritime people, as Thales and some of their other philosophers are said to have resided in that cultivated nation. — It is however probable that their astronomical learning came originally from Egypt, rather than from Babylon ; (notwithstanding the testimony of Herodotus to the contrary) as their Philosophers were much earlier acquainted with the former nation than with the latter ; and it is certain that the Egyptians applied at a very early period to Astronomy and Geometry ; studies which they were in some measure necessitated to pursue by the peculiar circumstances of their country. By measuring the depths of the Nile, and by knowing the quantity of water which was

Stand in thy fight! The towering piles* that strike
 Th' astonish'd gaze, by toiling ages rear'd 445
 The tombs of Kings, inclose the putrid earth
 By worms now loathed. Yon high majestic dome
 In solemn grandeur rear'd, unfolds to view

The Labyrinth. These Figures widely strow'd,
 The mystic spells hung careless o'er the robe 450
 Of thought, where Reason's deep discerning search
 Can catch ideal shapes; veil'd from the ken
 Of vulgar hope, as yon pale western gleam
 Behind the cloud's blue mantle. The fine form,
 Fired by the sun's attenuating beam 455
 That thrills the vivid nerve; alive and keen,
 Drinks purer spirits, and the kindling soul

necessary to fertilize the soil, they were probably led to acquire geometrical knowledge; and as the appearance of the Dog-star regulated this matter, it is reasonable to suppose, that their attention to this circumstance introduced astronomical researches. See Diod. Sicul. lib. i.

* *The towering piles, &c. The labyrinth.*] For a particular account of those wonderful structures, we refer the reader to Herodot. lib. ii. c. 127, 148, &c. Ammian. Marcel. lib. xxiii. and Diod. ub. sup.

Starts all to transport; in the sparkling glass:
 Where Fancy looks, ten thousand beauteous shapes
 Dance on the sight; and Judgment's guiding hand 460
 From these selects to clothe her kindred train;
 Robed like the Spring, in all the loosen'd swim
 Of sweeping luxury.—Hence Learning shunn'd
 The Vulgar's rude approach; Philosophy
 Walk'd with the Graces: the mysterious veil 465
 Wrapt o'er her form, from the weak dazzled eye
 Screen'd her diviner beauties.—Lo thy doubts
 At once dispell'd! Not these the simple train
 Of smiling Innocence, untaught to know
 Temptation's larking snare; to shun the thorn 470
 O'erlaid with flowers. Not these have trod the gloom
 Of Night and Ignorance: But the young beam
 Of dawning Science, o'er th' enlighten'd mind

[*In the sparkling glass, &c.*] This description of the Eastern people may be applied with particular propriety to the Egyptians, among whom enigmas, symbols, fables, and allegories, which are the offspring of imagination, were remarkably predominant. As a proof of this, in concurrence with other testimony, we need only to adduce the practice of the poets who travelled into that country, and formed their writings upon the model of that people. See the Author's Essay on the Lyric Poetry of the Antients, Let. i. p. 16, &c.

Hath shone all-radiant as the spangling star
 That gilds the morn's fair crown. Bold Reason there 475
 Hath rang'd his circuit; and a glimmering ray
 From Revelation^a, trembling thro' the void,

Hath

^a *A glimmering ray from Revelation.*] Though there is, no doubt, some truth in this observation; yet by the well-meant zeal of some writers who would deduce every mythological absurdity from the Bible; it has given rise to so many extravagant Theories, that an impartial Reader who would examine this matter, finds himself bewildered in the Labyrinth of Conjecture. Some of these gentlemen (otherwise respectable for their learning) indulge the wildest flights of imagination, and collect the remote points of similarity to support their hypotheses. These because they have found an ancient city of Cilicia, of the name of ADANA, they will have this place to be built in honour of Adam; and because Adam is called the Son of God, and Saturn the Son of Heaven, for this and some other proofs equally convincing, they would persuade us that Saturn was Adam. See Voss. de Idol. lib. i. The reader is no sooner inclined to wish that this might be supported by probable evidence, but a second tribe are introduced, who tell us, that Saturn was not Adam but Abraham. In the same spirit, a learned Author conjectures, that the Taautus (from whom Sanchoniatho is said to have borrowed many of his principles) was the same with Moses;—and this for no reason, but because Moses and Sanchoniatho happen to agree in some tenets with regard to Physiology. The truth of this matter probably is, that the Jews and Egyptians

Hath glanced on Truth. O'er all the circling skies,
 Gay Hope elate hath stretch'd her daring flight,
 And scann'd their worlds unnumber'd.—Yet are these 480
 Thus groveling to the Brute! When o'er the fields,
 Rolls yon deep current to impregn the soil
 With fatning moisture: at the pompous shrine *

Of

Egyptians became reciprocally acquainted with the opinions of each other, at the time when the former were in a state of captivity; and hence no doubt, arise some resemblances in their philosophical opinions, which are however so intermingled with fictitious circumstances on the part of the latter, that it is no easy thing to discover the latent truth which is screened behind so dark a veil.

* *At the pompous shrine, &c.]* The Apis of the Egyptians represented the God Osiris, whose soul was supposed to transmigrate into this animal. The funeral honours performed to this Deity, and the places through which the procession passed, gave occasion, as Diodorus Siculus insinuates, to the fables of Cocytus, Lethe, Charon, &c. to which the poets are so highly indebted. The next in succession to Apis was a bull called Mnevis, and worshipped at Heliopolis. Ο δὲ ἐν Ἡλιοπολὶ τρεφομένης βους οὐ Μνεῖν καλοῦσιν, μέλας ἐστὶ, καὶ δεινέρας ἔχει τιμὰς μῆλα τὴν Ἀπιν, Plut. de Isid. & Osid. Absurd however as this, and many other Egyptian institutions may appear, it is yet certain that they retained just ideas of the Supreme Being. Of this truth the celebrated inscription on the temple at

Of bellowing Apis ; yon pale prostrate throng
Disgrace the name of wisdom, and of man. 485

Long, deeply-pierced, th' astonished mind revolved
This humbling scene ; deplored th' incongruous search
Of baffled Reason, as its varying aims
Alternate point to Wisdom, or decline
To Folly. Yet the conscious shame that flush'd 490
The glowing cheek, avail'd not to repress
Presumption : still th' indignant thought supplied
Some gloss to palliate, what the secret soul
Yet shock'd and dubious labour'd to dissolve.

“ YET mighty Power (replied my faltering tongue ;) 495
“ Yet has my eye in these unfolding scenes
“ But mark'd the morn of Science. O'er the train,
“ That stopp thus humbly to the lordly shrine,
“ And bloat their brightest hope ; the finer Arts ”

“ Have
Sais, as it is preserved by Plutarch, affords a remarkable proof. De Isid,
& Osid. The opinions of this kind which were entertained appear to
have been confined to a few individuals, as the bulk of the people cer-
tainly run into the most absurd and ridiculous theology.

* *The finer Arts, &c.*] It does not appear that the Egyptians made

" Have ne'er diffused their radiance. The full form 500
 " Of Moral Excellence hath fail'd to wake
 " Th' enlightened mind; nor on the mental ear,
 " Hath Music cherub-tongued, pour'd the strong tide
 " Of soul-dissolving Harmony; nor rouzed
 " The voice of Eloquence; nor tuned the lyre 503
 " That strikes the heart, and from its thrilling strings
 " Calls every gentler note. Philosophy,
 " Veil'd by mysterious symbols;—to the few
 " Hath loosed her mantling robe; to these her hand

" O'er

remarkable proficiency in any of the fine Arts, if we except Architecture. No master-piece of painting is mentioned by any of the Ancients as having been drawn in Egypt, and Diodorus informs us, that the Sculptors of Greece were employed in that country, as better artists than the inhabitants themselves, Diod. ub. sup. Though we are indeed told, that some of the first Greek poets travelled into Egypt; yet their design in this probably was, not so much to cultivate their poetic vein, as to acquire philosophical knowledge. We ought always to remember that these writers were considered by their countrymen as Teachers and Philosophers.

[To these her hand, &c.] The studies to which the Egyptians applied most assiduously were Geometry, Astronomy, and Natural Philosophy. We have already mentioned the reason which led them to cultivate the

"O'er heav'n's blue arch hath mark'd the worlds that roll;
 "Harmonious, moving thro' the waste of air
 "Around some central orbit: or the course
 "Of the bright star that thro' the glimmering dawn,
 "Spangles the orient.—But conjoin'd to these;
 "Where are the rules whose strict observance forms
 "The soul to Wisdom? where the straitned path
 "That leads to virtue? where the moral plan
 "Wrought by reflection's steady glance, that warms
 "Th' exulting wish to transport? Yet are these,
 "These nobler truths that touch the heart of man; 520
 "And stamp proportion on the draught of life;
 "Bright Reason's genuine offspring. By his aid,
 "In beauteous symmetry beheld, their charms
 "Inchant the kindling thought, that feels the power
 "Of native Goodness, and with eager aim 525
 "Toils up the roughening steep, to gain the prize
 "By Virtue rais'd to point it to the goal."

Nor these (the Sire rejoin'd) nor ought besides
 Of intellectual search was then unknown.

two former. Those Arts will in general be most particularly improved in every society, which are adapted to the peculiar circumstances of the individuals who compose it. See the Note on p. 97. l. 441.

Yet

Yet Reason stray'd in darkness, when his aim,
Aspired to reach th' Almighty, as the step
Of some bewilder'd traveller, that treads
The lonely wild, beneath the moon's wan ray,
That feebly trembles on some shore untried;
Or gilds a pathless waste. Yet if thy mind,
Still sway'd by partial nature, shrinks to yield
Its full assent; attend a noble scene;
And instant Truth shall flash upon the soul.

He spoke:—the Goddess of the changeful eye
Waved her transforming rod, and all around
Was lost in mantling shade.—Ascending slow,
A barren prospect struck my wondering gaze,

Bleak,

² *Ascending slow, a barren prospect, &c.*] The country of Attica exhibited an early proof of the advantages which result from application and industry. This little track of land, notwithstanding the encomiums which some of the natives bestow on it, (see particularly Zenoph. de Veget. ab init.) is naturally so rocky and barren, that the foreigners who over-run the other parts of Greece, permitted the inhabitants of Attica to live in peace, as not thinking their country worth the trouble of keeping. Yet the industry of the Athenians, assisted by the mildness of the climate, improved the soil to such a degree, that it not only was fitted to produce

Bleak, desert, wild; where the high-arching shade
 Of pendent rocks hung o'er the boundless deep;
 That roar'd tumult'ous; and the ridgy hills
 Stretch'd their wild spires to heav'n.—Yet soon the hand
 Of culture waving o'er the roughned waste;
 The Desert blossom'd, and the softned soil
 Bloom'd with the fruits of Ceres. To this sight
 Intensely gazing; in the column'd pride
 Of Architecture, when her noblest plan
 Receives the mould of Elegance;—arose
 A spacious City. The majestic domes,
 Shaped by Proportion's nicest touch, inticed
 Th' enamour'd eye, that stray'd from scene to scene
 In sweet vicissitude; mark'd the proud Fane²,

All

produce whatever fruits grew in any other country then known; but we are told that all of these arrived quickly at perfection, and decayed very slowly. *Και μὲν ὅσα περ οἱ θεοὶ ἀγαθὰ ἐν τοῖς ἀποικοῖσι παρέχουσι, καὶ ταῦτα πάντα ἡμεῖς προΐαυτά μιν ἀρχαῖαι, οὐκ αὖτε δι' ἡμῶν, &c.* Xenoph. *an. sup.* What this great author says afterwards of this country being situated in the middle of the earth, and of the temperature of the climate excelling all others, proceeds from that amiable partiality, of which every man is susceptible in favour of his country.

² Mark'd the proud Fane, &c.] That the Greeks, and particularly

the

All nobly simple; on whose pillar'd arch,
Taste lean'd his arm reclin'd in graceful ease,
And Sculpture plied his chisel; or survey'd
The haunt of mild Philosophy; the bank
O'erlaid with flowers, where the young Graces form'd
Her aery train, and bright-eyed Beauty wove
Her robe, that floated to the balmy gale.

Next the proud Forum caught th' attentive view,
A mighty pile, where stood the godlike Power
Of heav'n descended Eloquence!—His look
Glanced rapid lightning, and his arm upheld
The thunder's madning bolt: erect he stood,

the Athenians, carried Architecture to its highest perfection, is a truth universally acknowledged. The invention of man has never yet been able to add a new order to those, which this ingenious people invented. The celebrated temple of Minerva at Athens still remains the admiration and wonder of travellers.

The whole so measur'd true, so lessen'd off
By fine proportion, that the marble pile,
Form'd to repel the still or stormy waste
Of rolling ages, light as fabrics looks
That from the magic wand aerial rise.

THOMSON,

Though

Though veil'd from fight; and pour'd enlivening fire
 Into the patriot-breast, and rais'd the hand
 To bold expression; or with lenient balm
 Soften'd the yielding heart, and o'er the form
 Of bleeding Innocence, or Liberty
 Red from Oppression's iron scourge; he gave
 The heart wild-throbbing, and the manly tear;

Then bloom'd the pencil's beauteous offspring^a, warm
 With mimic life, the ripened Figures glow'd,
 And swell'd in easy majesty: array'd
 By simple elegance, bright Helen breath'd
 Unfading roses, and the loosen'd robe
 Of Venus, ruffling from the silver wave,
 Gave charms all-lovely to th' enraptured view,

^a *Then bloom'd the pencil's beauteous offspring, &c.*] The author has mentioned as proofs of the Grecian excellence in painting pieces, which, though they were wrought by the artists of that country, yet were not all of them performed by Athenians. The names of Apelles, Praxiteles, and Xeuxis, reflect lustre on that happy climate to which they owed their birth. It is indeed alledged by some moderns, from the few remains of ancient painting which have come down to us, that the performers excelled in the designing and expression of their pieces, but were unequal in the perspective.

And

And beauty heav'n-illumined;—The rich grape
Hung clustering near, that from the fields of air
Inticed the wondering people; and the flow
Of waving curtains mock'd the cheated eye,
That mark'd their folds high-swelling on its gaze.

Full in the port a pompous navy rode;
The loose oar skimming o'er the surgy wave,

Prepared

^b *Full in the port, &c.*] The scene of this description is laid at the time when the Athenians undertook the conquest of Sicily, which proved so fatal to them in the event. At this period Athens appears to have been in the zenith of her glory; and we have fixed upon it as a crisis, at which we may judge of the utmost purpose which the genius of the Athenians was capable of effectuating, and as it affords at the same time a remarkable instance of their superstition. This celebrated expedition was undertaken about the middle of the Peloponnesian war, when the Athenians alone were not only supporting their own interests, and those of their allies, against the combined forces of the other nations of Greece, but were even meditating the conquest of distant countries. The names of Socrates, Plato, Alcibiades, and Nicias, render this period of their history remarkable above any other, both for the achievements of war, and for the highest improvement of that philosophy, by which a nation is benefited and adorned. That this people however fully merited the character given them by an inspired writer, of being *αὐτοδίδακτοι*,
i. e.

Prepared to plow the boiling deep.—Elate, and vindictive 590
 The sprightly mariners in thought survey'd
 The land where Ceres showers her yellow spoils
 Already opening, the delicious groves,
 The flowery lawns their own. Vain wish! the hand
 Of Fate opposed, and barr'd her iron door, 595
 And spurn'd presumptuous hope. The people pour'd
 Thro' the broad gates to mark the pompous scene,
 Or clasp their parting friends. The hoary Sire
 Stretch'd his time-trembling arms, to lock the son
 In strict embrace; and wildly-faltering, cried 600

i. e. too superstitious, was evident even at this period, from their behaviour to Alcibiades, one of the greatest men to whom their country gave birth. Because this young man had in a youthful frolic defaced the statues of Mercury, the god of thieves and pickpockets, his enemies immediately conspired his destruction; and that the blow might be surely aimed, they deferred the execution of their purpose until he had set sail on his voyage to Sicily. They then terrified the superstitious populace, by denouncing the indignation of the Gods upon the Athenians; and procured the celebrated decree, by which an irremediable wound was given to the power and glory of Athens. Alcibiades made his escape; and the unfortunate death of the good Nicias, and his unhappy countrymen, opened too late the eyes of the Athenians, and produced a sincere, though un-availing repentance.

P R O V I D E N C E. III

Be brave, and know thy Country!—To the Gods
 The warm libation stream'd; and all to heav'n
 Raised suppliant eyes, and call'd th' eternal Powers
 With unavailing prayers. The navy row'd
 Far o'er the Deep's blue bosom, and the throng 605
 Caught a last look, and left the desert shore.

YET mid this scene of triumph, the dark seeds
 Of dire commotion sprung: for mid the Panes
 Innumerable, swelling on the Stranger's gaze,
 A group of statues, where the marble breathed 610
 Warm from the Sculptor's forming stroke, were clad
 In floating robes; each bearing on his arm
 Some separate ensign of imperial sway.

O'er some, loose Youth in frolic pastime wild
 Had spread dishonour, and defaced the forms 615
 With scars unseemly, or untied their wreaths,
 Or hurl'd them headlong from the sacred shrine.

HENCE hovering dreadful to the gloomy thought
 Of Superstition, hung th' avenging bolt
 O'er their devoted heads. Presages dire 620
 Rose to the mind deep-musing; Death, Despair,
 And Jove's bright Ægis, thro' the withering limbs

That

That shoots pale fear?—Yon mighty fleet is doom'd
 To sure destruction, if th' offended Power
 Of Justice yields not to the lenient voice
 Of Prayer; if he who mock'd th' eternal Powers,
 Atones not with his blood. At once we view'd
 A light-oar'd galley skimming o'er the waves,
 To reach the distant navy; that the man
 Who maim'd the statues^c, might by death appease
 The dreams of dark Suspicion, by the breath
 Of with'ring Envy rais'd to taint the mind.

THE power of Thought on these perplexing scenes
 Long cast a serious eye, and thus began.

^c *That the man who maim'd, &c.*] It is proper to observe here, that though this proceeding of the Athenian people, with regard to Alcibiades, is mentioned as the effect of Superstition; yet the Author does not mean to vindicate him from the charge of impiety. An attempt to subvert, or to expose to ridicule the established religion of any country, however absurd or irrational (unless some good end can be effectuated by such a conduct) is certainly flagitious, and deserves the severest chastisement. The Athenians were only actuated by Superstition in this affair, as by their precipitancy to punish a supposed offence, they deprived themselves of an excellent General; and, as they absurdly concluded, that the Deity would punish upon an army the crime of an individual, who might have been tried at a proper time by the laws of his country.

Lo Athens rises to thy view! Thou seest 635
 The clime beloved of Wisdom, where improved,
 The morn of Science ripens into day.
 There the faint beam that o'er th' Egyptian clime
 Shook loosely-fluttering, pours a steady blaze,
 Unstain'd by passing clouds. The Persian there ^d, 640
 Marks his young system opening on the gaze,
 To full-proportion'd symmetry. With joy,
 Thy sons, Phœnicia, in the thronging port
 Behold reviving Commerce. Ev'n the look
 Of pale Judea brightens, as the draught 645
 Unfolds Religion's beauteous form, pourtray'd
 In fairer colours, and the kindling flame,

^d *The Persian there, &c.*] The mythology of the Athenians was much more complex than that of any other nation; as this ingenious people were not only daily finding out new Deities for themselves, but were adopting into the number the Gods of every nation around them. Hesiod reckons no less than thirty thousand of these in his time:

Τρις γὰρ μυρία τίττεν ἐνὶ χθονὶ θεῶν ἑταίρους
 Ἀθάνατος Ζηὺς, Φυλάκας μερόπων ἀνθρώπων.

The Persians, Egyptians, and even the Jews, may be said on that account with propriety, to have observed their different systems of Religion in that of the Athenians.

Waked at Devotion's shrine. No more thou view'st
 Austere Philosophy confined to Few :
 Lo where she moves, with all th' immortal nine, 650
 That sweep the lyre, melodious ! In her eye
 The Graces languish, and her melting voice
 Is harmony. In Plato's glowing page,
 Her strain still vibrates to the thrilling heart
 Deep-pierced, that pants to clasp the lovely form 655
 Of smiling Beauty ; or intranced surveys
 In vision's vivid beam, Elysian groves,
 The great rewards of Virtue ; and elate,
 Bursts o'er the bound of death, and hopes the skies.

THERE heav'n-bred Genius fired Pericles' soul, 660
 Beloved of Pallas, on whose tuneful tongue
 Divine Persuasion pour'd her magic lay.
 Stern Justice there to Aristides' hand
 Consign'd her balance ; thro' the illumined soul
 Of godlike Socrates, meek Wisdom shot 665
 Her purest ray, and to the mental hope
 Display'd a world to come. Themistocles
 Elate, from Luxury's high-arched brow,
 Snatch'd the loose plume, and on her purple crest,
 That shook on Victory's triumphant wheel ; 670

End of W.

Wrote

Wrote Disappointment.—Yet not all the arts
 That polish life; not the meridian reign
 Of mild Philosophy that forms the mind;
 Not all the just simplicity of taste;
 Nor pour'd from warbling lutes, the melting lay; 675
 Nor the sweet plaining of the tragic Muse
 That thrill'd the ear of Pity; nor the tide
 Of rapid Eloquence that rush'd along,
 And whirl'd light Passion on its headlong wave:
 Not these united * gave the soul to reach 680
 The First of Beings.—Back th' astonish'd thought
 Recoil'd to earth, lost in the boundless maze
 Of His perfections, and despair'd to rise.

* *Not these united, &c.*] It is not meant here to insinuate, that the light of Nature might not have led the Heathens to form just conceptions of the Supreme Mind; as we have already seen, that some of their philosophers and poets speak with suitable dignity of the natural and moral attributes of the Deity. The author means only to observe, that the most ignorant, which was by far the most numerous tribe, gave credit to the most extravagant Fiction; and that the more intelligent part were unable to form so full and perfect an idea of the Creator, as we find exhibited in the writings of Inspiration. See the Note on p. 75. l. 81.

THENCE raised to hope, from Reason's yielding grasp
 Bold Fancy snatch'd the rein; on airy schemes
 Intent, and scenes light-floating on the view.
 Hence rose her pictured Deities, as Fear,
 Or Passion sketch'd the train. The Thunderer fat
 Shrined in black clouds, or bellow'd o'er the field,
 Smit with the dust of earth: Rapine and Rage
 Mark'd his dire course, and Murder stain'd his hands.
 Hence Fury shook her torch, and Jealousy,
 Inflamed to madness, roll'd her yellow eyes
 O'er heav'n's celestial azure. From the groves
 Of Cyprus, to the laughter-loving Queen,
 The Queen of Lust, high-fuming intense rose.
 One limp'd, and one was blind; in slaughter one
 Was blest, and bathed his horrid steps in gore.
 Ev'n she, the Power of Wisdom, from her limbs
 Shook off th' ethereal mantle, laid the helm,
 The spear aside, the black-descending plume,
 And Jove's eternal Ægls; call'd the Loves
 To wanton in her smile, and shew'd her form
 All-naked, swelling to th' enraptured gaze,

[Bellow'd o'er the field, &c.] See examples of this in Ovid's *Metam.*
 passim.

On Ida's shaggy top;—vain hope,—to gain 705

The prize of Beauty from a mortal hand,

SUCH Fancy sketch'd the heav'nly host; so deep

Plunged in the gulph of closing darkness, lay

Her wild creation.—Does thy secret soul

Reject it, or approve? Say, was a plan 710

So loose, so various, so unshaped of parts,

Form'd to impress conviction on the thought

Of cool deciding Reason? Strays the walk

Of erring Judgment to so dark a shore?

PROMPT to reply, yet cautious of offence, 715

The heart's soft whisper told the flashing glance

Its silent indignation. Then the Sage

Refum'd; his look was pity, and his voice

Soft as the breath of Evening, when it steals

Along the flowery bank, bedropp'd with dew. 720

YET was the draught that to thy blushing cheek

Calls up th' indignant colour, by the fons

Of Science long embraced. The Pencil shed

Its richest tints, fair from th' abyss of night

To call the form celestial; to describe 725

The birth of Infinite; to arm the hand
 Of Jove with thunder, and his eyes with rage.
 Nor less the Sculptor plied his forming art
 To fashion Deity; the chissel prest
 Thro' the blue marble's sweating veins, to shape 739
 The living bust in attitude obscene:
 Ev'n Architecture stretch'd her thought sublime
 To grasp the vast design: loose to her view,
 Th' imperfect forms of Grandeur swimm'd along,
 As sweeps a meteor o'er the flashing skies: 735
 Till Judgment's steady gaze had wrought the parts
 To fair proportion; till the simple touch
 Of magic Elegance had graced the dome,
 That rose (disgrace of Science!) to the Powers
 Of rapine, lust, and slaughter. These thou seest, 740
 Tho' waked to life, tho' delicate to feel
 Each finer movement of the melting soul;
 Tho' tuned by harmony, the trembling lay
 Was unison to Nature; tho' refined
 By sweet Philosophy's persuasive lore; 745
 Ev'n in their purest age by truth inspired,
 And taught by Wisdom, in thy simple guise
 Exalted Socrates!—Yet prone to act
 From superstitious terror.—Know the sails,

That

That late triumphant floated to the breeze, 750
 Shall waft yon navy to Sicilia's shore,
 But not to conquest; for their better Chief,
 Young Alcibiades, is doom'd to death,
 By Superstition doom'd, to fate the wish
 Of yellow-liver'd Envy. From its base, 755
 Their Dagon fallen, th' offended Power demands
 Blood for a sacrifice. Led by the Few,
 The many madden, and their frantic zeal,
 Quick as dry powder rushing into flame,
 Bursts the frail mounds of reason, justice, law; 760
 And whirls him to destruction. Yet are these,
 Keen, sensible, ingenious; prompt to glow
 With honest shame; and from the vulgar herd
 Of other climes, by worth disjoin'd as far,
 As from the twilight bat, th' aerial bird 765
 Sublime, that gazes on the dazzling sun
 With steady nerve, and wings the midway air.

Thus duped by Fancy, erring Reason stray'd
 Thro' Night's black gloom; and with uncertain step,
 Stumbled from rock to rock. The plan perplex'd, 770
 Obscure, that link'd on Wisdom's beauteous chain,
 Passion to Happiness (unequal yoke!)

And Folly to Perfection.—Such the path
Of those whom Nature charm'd, and Taste refined.

HERE paused the Sage. Attentive I revolved 775
The scene in silence, then serene replied.

“ CONVINCED by truth, th’ enlightned mind no more
“ Suspends its full assent.—I see how weak
“ The bark of Hope, to stem the mighty tide
“ Of shoreless Infinite : though Reason plies 780
“ Along the ruffled stream his waving oar ;
“ Or sees short lengths, or glimmers on the rock ;
“ Or marks the shallow of a ridgy bay ;
“ Yet hopeless of a wider range, repell’d
“ By every wave ; check’d by the winds, o’erawed 785
“ By opening views ; or sinking in the gulph
“ Of Darkness and Confusion.—O like Heav’n
“ Propitious ! frown not, if the labouring mind
“ Is still perplex’d ; if yet my thoughts demand,
“ Why Wisdom infinite, whose ways are Peace ; 790
“ Whose plan Perfection ; to so lame a Guide
“ So long consign’d the helm. Why on the soul
“ Flash’d not immediate vision ? He, whose breath
“ Waked the young offspring into life ; beheld

“ Its

" Its latent powers, knew all its reach of thought; 795
 " Saw it frail, various, weak, uncertain; left
 " To task unequal, and bewildered wild
 " In Error's devious maze. Had the keen beam
 " Of Heav'n shot radiant thro' the dusky gloom,
 " To point the path of Truth; had Reason shaped 800
 " His early course by some directing star;
 " Ne'er had bold Fancy's daring-wing essay'd
 " Th' unmeasured waste unaided; but repress'd,
 " Had moved responsive to the whisper'd lore
 " Of Judgment and of Nature. Then the ray, 805
 " So late that lightned on th' enquiring mind,
 " Had shone alike on all; nor man complain'd
 " Of partial favours on a part conferr'd,
 " Nor shower'd profuse and liberal on the whole."

DUBIOUS I spoke; for with indignant eye 810
 The Sire beheld me; and athwart his brow
 Reproof had cast her frown. Severe he said,

ACCUSE not Providence;—to thee its ways
 Are wrapt in darkness, rash alike thou deem'st
 Of wisdom or injustice.—Weigh the theme 815
 Unmoved, and hear calm thought's impartial lore.

LONG

Long ere the hour when heaven's meridian beam
 Burst thro' the clouds of Error, and unveil'd
 Scenes wrapt till then in triple night:—Before
 The voice Divine reveal'd a plan beyond 820
 The grasp of human thought;—thou know'st to rouse
 The slumbering race;—to bid exulting Hope
 Eye though remote and dim th' unfolding dawn,
 Heaven's chosen sons thro' many a distant age
 Announc'd th' approaching day. These held the torch 825
 To

§ *Announc'd th' approaching day,*] Upon reviewing the series of argument in this book, the Author was sensible of a defect which he hath here endeavoured to supply. The two great collateral evidences by which Christianity is supported, (the internal purity and excellence of its moral institutions supposed to be out of the question) are undoubtedly these of Prophecy and Miracles. Taking therefore this truth for granted, it will clearly follow, that whatever would have an obvious tendency, greatly to weaken the force of this evidence, and much more what must be wholly subversive of it, would naturally be avoided by a Being of consummate wisdom, even though what might be deemed an Evil, in consequence of this avoidance, should necessarily take place. When therefore it is said, that mankind in general were deprived for many ages of a benefit, to which the claim of all appears to be originally equal; I would reply, by putting the question:—What must have been the consequence, should we suppose this objection to be superseded?—It is obvious, that the two evidences

formerly

To Reason's glimmering light; and though afar
Beheld, yet clearly show'd th' eternal source
Of Light and Love, proclaim'd Messiah's reign;
Foretold how wide his empire, how divine
His works; his doctrines how refined and pure: 830
In life how great, each boastful Power subdued;
How raised in death triumphant o'er the tomb.

formerly mentioned are annihilated upon this hypothesis. In the former case, the greater part of mankind, for a purpose of the highest utility, are deprived of advantages conferred on their successors; but in the latter, in order to avoid this disadvantage, a Revelation of the Divine will is supposed to be promulgated to *men*, deprived of *the only* (external) evidences by which the truth of any Revelation whatever can by Man with his present faculties be properly ascertained.—This reasoning appears to me to be decisive on the point in question; when we contemplate Man as a creature who acquires conviction from progressionary evidence. Should it however be asked why either of these evils was originally permitted to take place?—The reply is obvious.—This permission contains no impeachment on the wisdom or justice of the Deity; but necessarily ariseth from the imperfection of human nature. In order to have superseded both, Reason must either have been determined constantly in its decisions by a divine and irresistible impulse; or the human nature being exalted to something higher, a Revelation must have been rendered inexpedient. Both these cases the reader will find examined afterwards.

Here

HERE on one base, a towering fabric! rests
 HALF REVELATION. Hence exploring thoughts
 Observes consistence in the draught, its parts 835
 Combined to perfect union.—Down the vale,
 The darkening vale of prophecy convey'd
 The rapt mind wandering eyes aerial forms
 Dim on the glimmering shade:—the waning moon
 Streaks as it glides each ranging shape; but half 840
 Beheld;—till gradual as the mounting Sun
 Dispels the mist, in full proportion view'd,
 Swells each fair form harmonious on the gaze,
 Its veil removes, as feels th' inspiring ray.

THUS in the plan reveal'd, the parts conjoin'd 845
 In firm coherence stand.—Seen from the first,
 Where on the rapt Seer's rolling eye-ball swim
 Successive scenes, as Time's revolving orb^h
 Displays ascending empires; or his hand
 High on some mole-hill points the Chiefⁱ, whose arm 850
 Furrow'd the ragged eminence; or spread

^h *Time's revolving orb, &c.*] See Daniel, ch. v. ver. 36 to 46, and ch. vii. pas.

ⁱ *Points the Chief, &c.*] Id. ch. xi.

Along the nations o'er its surface strow'd
 Imperial rule:—Thus from the source beheld,
 Till on th' historic page we mark the scenes
 Pourtray'd at large, and in the great event 855
 The mystic augury fulfill'd;—what proof
 Of Inspiration hence! Of thought divine
 Down the slow fall of many a lengthening age,
 One glorious aim in fight! selecting means
 To strike conviction on the mind; to join 860
 In proof, the voice of distant times, remote,
 And changed in all besides, yet here the same.

TILL then impartial, this connected chain
 Of solid argument, evincing clear
 (As wrought to flow perfection by the toil 865
 Of rolling ages) Heaven's inspiring ray
 Beam'd o'er the dark of Nature: and though spread
 On forms dim pyed thro' Time's o'er shading veil,
 Yet glanced on truths of high import; unknown
 To Reason's labouring search, but that the power 870
 Who scans all Nature, gave celestial aid;
 Say where its force had Heaven's great Father will'd
 In Earth's first scenes, the soul-enlivening beam
 To shine alike on all?—Religion then

One pillar lost, on whose broad basis rests 875
 Her stately pile; bare to th' assault of foes
 Had stood; her majesty defaced:—No Seer
 Heav'n-taught, the Herald of her glorious reign
 To point her future grandeur!—Then the voice
 Like that resounding on Judea's ear 880
 Far o'er the solemn wilderness; had ceased
 From age to age, as generations roll'd
 Slow down the tide of years,—to swell a peal
 That waked young forms yet immature, as wrapt
 In shades, and mantled with oblivion's wing 885
 They slumber'd on the bed of Night; and call'd
 On man's rapt fight the fitting shapes to glide,
 Each beckoning to the goal!—Nor here alone
 Had Revelation fail'd, thus from the birth
 Of Time commencing;—but the works divine 890
 That spoke its Authors from th' eternal fent
 To bear his great command; or yet unhear'd
 Had reach'd no end; or known, obscured by years,
 Wrought long 'ere Science on the gloomy rear
 Of darkness pour'd her rays: by Zeal's weak prop 895
 Depress'd; or limping on the feeble crutch
 Of lame Tradition;—say what Faith had eyed
 Thus shown, as clear and solid proof convey'd

Pure from alloy, though roll'd successive down
 In turbid channels oft. The purblind eye 900
 Of rapt Credulity, from shade to shade
 Still whirl'd in fruitless search; observant here,
 Had caught suspicion from so maim'd a tale.

BUT lo the power sublime of form, descends
 Robed in ethereal vesture! In her van 905
 I hear the Herald's awful call:—"Prepare
 " Ye earth-born race, for yet the little round
 " Of years elapsed, and Night's involving pall
 " Shall wrap your aims no more!—The Power that glads
 " All Heav'n, young beauty smiling in her train 910
 " Soon comes! Along her many-colour'd plumes
 " Sparkle the rags of Science!—Lo the sun,
 " The stars, the elements obsequious, hear
 " Her voice! I see the madding Ocean tamed!
 " The lame light-leaping, and the eye-lid sunk, 915
 " Robb'd of its fringed and azure-cinctured orb,
 " Rear'd on the dazzling sun!—Nor in a nook
 " Obscure, or huddled in the dark, as thy
 " To bear the keen and penetrating ray
 " Shall stand her deeds;—but to the liberal air 920
 " Spread on Earth's noblest theatres, before
 " Enlightened

" Enlightened people, by the noon-day beam
 " Fair Science long-illumed : her precepts scann'd
 " By calm Philosophy's deep-searching eye :
 " All clouds dispell'd, save what involving mist 925
 " Weak passion breathes from Doubt's malignant fen :
 " Thus at the hour by Him who rules supreme
 " Ordain'd, in angel state I see descend
 " The Daughter of the skies !"—Yet grant that Heav'n
 Submits, to Nature's glimmering search had lent 930
 Internal light : that some superior Power
 Had beckoning seized weak Reason's groping hand,
 And shew'd the object of his search ; and clear'd
 His trembling twilight to a perfect day :
 Then had thy thought elate * disdain'd to own 935

The

* *Then had thy thought elate, &c.*] This argument hath been explained with great force and propriety by the advocates of Christianity ; in answer to the objection drawn from its having been so late introduced.—A very little attention to the faculties of the human mind, will convince us that this observation is founded on truth and nature. As the mind of man is naturally prying and inquisitive ; so it is apt upon all occasions, not only to exult in the principles which it may have invented ; but to carry its researches from one subject to another ; and to consider as possible the most abstruse speculations. Without the testimony of experience,

The boon conferr'd; thine all the work had been;
 Nor God received His own.—Still if thou seekst
 To know why man is form'd so weak¹, so lame;

Why

rience we should never have believed, that principles of Theology so different from those which Reason appears to establish, could have obtained at any period; and far less than these should have been embraced by nations remarkably distinguished for polished and cultivated manners. The testimony of experience was therefore absolutely necessary to show us, how far human nature unassisted by Revelation, is able to proceed in theological discoveries; and to establish a criterion by which we may discriminate betwixt the researches of Reason, and the truths of Inspiration.—Had a compleat Revelation of the divine will been exhibited at any early period of the world; as the argument from prophecy must have been greatly weakened, if not wholly lost, a standard of this nature could never have been settled; and the mind insensible of its obligations to the Supreme Being, would have arrogated to itself those discoveries, which we are now fully satisfied it could never have invented.—Christianity therefore was not introduced till that period, at which the human mind might have an opportunity to know from the history of former ages, that its powers were inadequate to the discoveries of Theology; and consequently that a Divine Revelation was indispensably necessary.

¹ *Why man is form'd so weak, &c.*] i. e. Why Deity did not originally confer on man sufficient abilities to investigate these truths, without the

Why not advanced in Wisdom's rising scale
 To range a wider orbit: First demand, 940
 Why on the boar's broad bristly back besmear'd,
 Floats not the downy ermin; first enquire,
 Why the bright peacock mid' the noon-day blaze,
 That spreads his starry plumage to the sun;
 And gleams resplendent in the dazzling ray; 945
 Pours not thy lay sweet Philomel; nor wings
 The air with lightning-speed, and marks the earth
 A speck beneath.—Vain were the search? not less
 The Hope presumptuous that arraigns thy God;
 Who gave not sooner, what bestow'd, had moved 950
 Thy pride to question all: who form'd thee first
 A Man, but not an Angel.—Know 'twas deem'd
 Best by eternal Wisdom; that the search
 Of man unaided, should aspire in vain
 To reach the First of things; that in the maze 955
 Of Fancy wandering wild, his feet should err
 Far from th' ascent that leads to truth, inticed
 By the faint semblance of aerial shapes;
 By Phantomes swimming on the mental gaze;

aid of Revelation. This objection is but slightly touched here. The reader may see it treated at more length in Book I. from l. 907, to 951.

'Till

P R O V I D E N C E.

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'Till Heav'n recall'd his step; 'till God reveal'd 960
The path o'erlook'd by his presumptuous pride;
And burst th' involving Dark that form'd its veil.

HENCE Arrogance chastised, beholds her plume
Soil'd in the dust; hence Reason's judging eye
Sedate and slow th' historic field surveys: 965
Sees Nature's simple sons untaught by Art,
Roam o'er the violet-purple'd dale, serene;
Pure as the nectard stream that circling, warms
The peache's downy bosom: sees them caught
In Pleasure's silken chain; by Virtue left; 970
By Innocence misled, by Vice insnared.

THENCE down the steep of long-revolving years
Descends the wing slow-waving. On thy clime,
Illumined Egypt, his delighted gaze
Marks the first dawn of Science, heav'n-inspired, 975
Beam on th' enlightned path.—Piles, Bulwarks, Fanes,
And cloudy Pyramids ascending, stretch
Their spires to Heav'n. By astronomic chains^m

^m By astronomic chains, &c.] This refers to the defective system of Astronomy which obtained in these ages.

The spheres are circled; and the mounting Sun,
 On Fancy's magic wheel performs his round. 980
 Yet blind to truth, the darkned mind confounds
 The Maker with His work. He leaves them pale
 And groveling low at Instinct's hollowed shrine.

His noblest rites prophaned, th' indignant Power
 Averts his look; and lo, the happy climes 985
 Of Arts, and Elegance, and polish'd life;
 Unfold their mantling groves!—the Graces sport
 Loose on the balmy-pinnion'd gale, that waves
 Thy stream Ilyssus, where the shady spires
 Of busy Athens tremble! Here at last, 990
 He hopes a nobler plan, but hopes in vain.
 Innumerable, floating on the startled view,
 The swarming Deities arise!—Behind
 The Furies howl; Lust, Rapine, Murder, Rage,
 With blood-stain'd eyes stride in the horrid train. 995
 Deform'd, and baleful taint the murky air

“ARE these thy Gods, O Athens? Was my voice
 “(Exclaims the Power aghast!) strain'd to support
 “A scheme that teems with Folly?—The wild dream
 “Of howling Phrenzy, forms not to the mind 1000

“Shapes

"Shapes more discordant, when the dizzy head

"Swims, and the breath of Fancy whirls the brain!

"WARN'D by my call, 'tis said the wiser Few

"Despised their country's superstitious rites;

"Nor bent at Folly's shrine the supple knee. 1005

"'Tis just:—but wrought they by my light convey'd,

"A nobler system then? Did Reason point

"The path to Truth? Ah no!—Philosophy

"Dream'd ^a of immortal life; but dream'd by starts;

"By

^a *Philosophy dream'd, &c.*] It affords a melancholy proof of the weakness of the human mind to reflect that there are many important truths, which have, during a succession of ages been firmly believed only by ignorant and uncivilized nations; and that the powers of the mind in their highest state of improvement, are productive of Scepticism, rather than Conviction. Of the truth of this observation, the present subject affords a remarkable instance. We have already remarked, that the belief of a Future State characteriseth in one shape or other all Nations whatever. The Heathens indiscriminately had their Elysium and Tartarus; the Mohammedans have their Houris;—the Savages of India and America suppose that their Fathers enjoy over again in another world, the pleasures which were most agreeable in this life;—and the ancient inhabitants of North Briton believed (if Ossian is to be credited) that their warriors sailed on clouds, and pursued *aereal deer*; an opinion which may afford

" By starts awaked, and doubted.—To her search 1010

" The light was feeble, and the field around

" Was long and dark, and desolate—She gave

some consolation to a *modern superannuated Fox-hunter*.—The Philosophers of antiquity however, who may be supposed to have examined this subject with greater attention, express themselves much more dubiously. We have already seen Plato expressing his desire of obtaining some Divine light with regard to this matter; and we shall find his follower Cicero, equally uncertain and fluctuating in his opinions. *Me vero delectat, (says he, speaking of a future state of existence) deinde etiam si non sit, mihi tamen persuaderi velim.* One of his speakers in the beautiful Dialogue on Death, says very ingenuously, upon being asked whether he had read Plato's *Phædon*; that he knows not how it is; when he read the book, he assented to the reasoning, but when he laid it aside, his doubts returned, *Tuscul. Quæst. lib. i.* The same author informs us, that the celebrated Theophrastus complained on his death-bed, that Nature had capriciously bestowed a long life upon Crows and Fawns, to whom it can be of no advantage; and had made man so short-lived, to whom a longer series of years would have been so highly beneficial, for completing his researches. *Quærebatur igitur si cum illa videre cæpisset, extingui, Id. lib. iii.* We might confirm this remark by many other examples of this kind; if these would not swell the note to too much length. It is sufficient to observe from the whole, the propriety with which it is said in the Sacred Writings, that Life and Immortality are brought to light by the Gospel.

" The

" The palm to Hope.—Hope on his rainbow plumed,
 " Sat wrapt in vision, and his glittering wings
 " Expanding reach'd the skies; but Doubt behind, 1015
 " Slow dogg'd his flight, and breathed a fullen cloud,
 " That screen'd its glories from his misty view.

" ONE Sage alone, with philosophic eye
 " Look'd thro' the gloom, and spied the ruling hand
 " Of Wisdom in her works; but from his sight 1020
 " The Vision vanish'd; to his lips divine,
 " By Superstition held, the poison'd draught
 " Crack'd Life's weak strings, and sent th' unprisoned mind,
 " Half-clear'd, to know the truth his mind explored."

HERE Reason fails; his flagging wing demands 1025
 Superior aid to raise his loosen'd plumes;
 To form them to the flight. He marks afar,
 Superior aid descending; and submits
 Marks the long path where Revelation pours
 Her steady ray, and shows new scenes, display'd 1030
 In rich variety; and owns the hand
 Of Wisdom rear'd conspicuous o'er the whole.

THUS as thine eye pursues the mighty plan;
 Thou seest the Power who call'd the kindling beam
 Of light from Chaos; whose high mandate reins 1035
 The wheeling winds, or on their wild wings showers
 The balm of Health; who bids the mountains rear
 Their cloudy summits, or volcanos waste
 Their fiery fuel; and consults in all
 The good of man:—Thou seest Him in the scheme 1040
 Of moral Good, disposing o'er the whole
 One sum of Benefit; and as it swells
 To fair harmonious symmetry; thou seest
 One glorious aim that rules, and works in all,

PERHAPS, (thus milder spoke the parting Sage) 1045
 Perhaps eternal Wisdom^o leaves immured

* *Perhaps eternal Wisdom, &c.*] This remark is subjoined in answer to a question which may very naturally be asked; and that is, why Revealed Religion, now that it is granted to mankind; is limited to so small a number of the human species. Perhaps it is not wholly from the purpose to reply; that as by the late introduction of Christianity, mankind were prepared to embrace it by being fully convinced of the insufficiency of Reason; so by its being conferred only upon a part, this conviction is still impressed forcibly upon the mind; as we see that unassisted Reason is

In ignorance and night, the tribes that roam
 O'er regions far remote, where Nature showers
 With liberal hand her treasures : From a Few,
 A favour'd Few, removes the mantling veil ; 1050
 That hence to Gratitude's sweet-thrilling string
 The heart may move responsive ; that secured
 By living evidence, the mind may feel,
 May own its weakness ; taught at last to know
 That Nature's eye unaided, hopes in vain 1055
 To reach its God ; that as the circling orb
 Of Providence revolves ; the secret wheels
 That shape its course, harmonious, tho' unseen,
 Roll to their destined end ; though deem'd by man
 Weak or excentric ; for the God within, 1060
 Works not by means to Human Pride reveal'd ;
 But silent moves to reach his great Design.

HIGH on the gale ascending as he spoke,
 The yellow cloud received him ; and the wing 1065
 Of Fancy glittering waved, and reach'd the skies,

as unable at this period as it was at any former one, to form a consistent
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PROVIDENCE.

BOOK III.

HUMAN LIFE.

BY Time's slow-heaving tide ^a, the works of man
Are whelm'd; how sinks beneath his wasteful sway
The pride of Empire! glittering for a while,
The gilded vessels sport along the stream,

Fann'd

^a *By Time's slow-heaving tide, &c.]* As we have in the two former Books endeavour'd to point out the most conspicuous marks of Design, which appear in the Formation of the world, and in its Government, with respect to the introduction of Christianity; the next topic which falls naturally into consideration in canvassing this subject, relates to those traces of Wisdom, which a view of the Deity's moral Government suggests to the mind upon examination. The objections which lie against Providence,

Fann'd with propitious gales : the sides are firm,
 The hull capacious ; and the swelling sails
 Float to the breeze of Summer. Ah how soon,
 Torn by the Tempest's wildly-rushing wing ;
 And foundering on the deep, it lies deform'd,
 A shatter'd wreck ! nor less on Life descends
 The storm impetuous ; let thy silver hairs,

5

10

dence, from the unequal distribution of Reward and Punishment which takes place at present, can only be entirely removed by our belief that there is another state in which a more perfect Dispensation obtains ; and the author taking this for granted, only proposeth to enquire, whether a review of Human Life does not afford us sufficient reasons to conclude, that such a Dispensation does really take place, and that the Supreme Being consults the benefit of his creatures, by subjecting them to temporary Evils. In order to effectuate this end, he enquires, whether Vice in some sense is not its own punishment, as Virtue is said to be its own reward, even in this life. He assigns some obvious causes for which Crimes are not chastised in proportion to their demerit, in the present state of things ; and the punishment due to the Bad is apparently transferred to the Virtuous. He concludes from this detail, that there are evident marks of Design in the present management of the world ; and, after suggesting from these the probability of Future Retribution, he sums up the work with taking a view of it, as far as it concerns the happiness of the Just.

Time-

Time-hallow'd Age, be witness ! the dim eye,
The tottering tread, the furrow'd cheek, the hand
Yet trembling from the blast. Tell ye who tend
The bed of death ; how o'er the helpless race 15
Of human victims, strides the harpy foot
Of Misery triumphant ! while the veins
Shrink to the Fever's scorching breath, or feel
Starting, the fiery dart of racking Pain,
That writhes to agony ; or loosened shake 20
Before Consumption ; when her baleful sponge
Drops its green poison on the springs of life.

Nor these alone pursue the race of man.
Far other ills await, far other woes
Like vultures revel on his canker'd heart. 25

O ye who nightly languish o'er the tomb,
Where sleeps thy dust, Eugenio ! Ye whose hearts
O'er Virtue bleed, when reeking from the scourge
Of dire Oppression, in some lonely cave
She pines all desolate !—Ye Powers that haunt 30
The vale where Genius breathes her plaint alone,
Wild to the whistling wind ; her voice unheard,
As airs that warble o'er the murmuring dale

Remote,

Remote, to Solitude's enchanted ear!

O tell, why wrapt in Grandeur's floating robe, 35

Vice mounts her throne! while trembling at the bar

Stands Innocence appall'd! Tell why the hand

Of strutting Impudence, unlicensed, grasps

The palm of worth, and his indignant brow

Looks down, while meek-eyed Modesty dismay'd, 40

Mantles her cheek in crimson, and retires

To blush in silence! why thy purple car,

High-plumed Ambition, bathes its rolling wheels

In blood, and o'er pale Virtue's streaming corse,

Rapid and mad'ning, springs to reach the goal. 45

Thus while slow-wandering o'er the purple heath

Stray'd my lone step; the melancholy mind

Had pour'd its plaint low-whispering, to the gale,

That sighing soothed its anguish. From his noon

The sun declined, and sloping from her sphere 50

Sublime, the lark's loose-wheeling wing retired

Prone to her humble couch. Around the wild

Was bleak and pathless; the surrounding hills,

High-heaving, shew'd their gleamy tops afar;

And roll'd the plover's deeply-plaintive wail 55

Along the founding desert. Soon abash'd,

I mark'd

I mark'd with timid eye the solemn step
 Of Contemplation. Fancy's magic wand
 Behind him waved; and o'er her swelling limbs
 Light swimm'd the many-colour'd robe.—A while 60
 The Sire in silence view'd me, and began.

O'ER Nature's ample field thy wondering mind
 Ha'h seen enlightned Wisdom's guiding ray
 Stream on the work, hath mark'd her beaming eye
 Fair on the Thunder's ^b ragged front; her step 65
 Along the Whirlwind's ^c desolating path;
 The deep Volcano's gleam, and thy wide waste,
 Devouring Earthquake!—To the Mountain's brow ^d
 Thine eye hath traced her walk, and seen her scoop
 The River's bed, or teach the bubbling rill 70
 To steal wild-wandering o'er the lillied dale,
 That waves its dewy mantle o'er the stream.

^b *Her beaming eye fair on the Thunder's, &c.*] See Book I. from l. 496.

^c *Her step along the Whirlwind, &c.*] See B. I. l. 510, 306, 822.

^d *To the Mountain's brow, &c.*] See above from l. 638 to 795.

Nor less to aid ^a weak Reason's search, her thought
 To man propitious, form'd the nobler plan,
 That gave new beauties to th' enraptured view. 75
 Slow on the flight of Time, thy mind hath seen
 Her step attendant; and the glorious scheme,
 Fraught with high bounty, to perfection wrought;
 Frail Nature aided; Doubt's black cloud dispell'd;
 Truth from wild Fancy's wildering maze recall'd; 80
 And heav'n indulgent to the hopes of man,

WHILE these fair-beaming, to the mental eye
 Display eternal Wisdom;—think'st thou then,
 In Life's perplexing scenes her hand unseen?
 The doubt were impious. Let the raven speak 85
 Her care, as o'er the solitary wild
 He sails, and stooping to the destined prey,
 Flutters his ebon-coloured wing.—Thy plaint
 Be ceased; attend in silence, and adore!

He spoke; and swelling, as the magic rod 90
 Of Fancy touch'd the trembling earth; around,
 A woody theatre arose! The pines

^a *Nor less to aid, &c.*] Book II. pass.

Waved their green vesture o'er the shaded lawn,
 Where bloom'd spontaneous beauty ; all the tribe
 That mellow Autumn from the cloudy hill 95
 Beholds loose-floating: Mid the circled field,
 An easy mount ascending, raised its head
 High o'er the topmost boughs ; whence to the gaze
 Delighted, all the rushing landskip glow'd.
 Two paths of flowery turf, where Art disposed 100
 The rich embroidery, blooming as it rose,
 Led thro' the winding forest. One inticed
 Th' unwary step, that gradual scaled the brink
 Of a steep precipice ; whence the weak sight,
 Dizzy with horror ! mark'd the shaggy rock, 105
 An height immense ! and tottering as he gazed
 Th' affrighted youth dropp'd headlong. From the mount
 The other sweeping shew'd a pompons pile,
 Whose front transparent glittered to the sun,
 And shew'd the broider'd dale. Its form display'd 110
 The simple elegance of taste.—Below
 A range of pillars, easy, light, sublime ;
 Upheld at once, and dignified the domes
 That o'er the swelling arch majestic lean'd.
 Above, an aery cupola display'd 115
 Its gleaming circle :—from th' illumined round,

The landskip danced in all the kindling hues
That Fancy eyes with transport.— —

As all-dissolving, on the mount's high brow
I mark'd the scene luxuriant;— on my ear, 120
The lute sweet-warbling pour'd a melting lay
Deep-felt, that trembled to the wishing soul.

SUDDEN a Form all-radiant, as the cloud
That gilds a summer eve; flow from the grove
Advanced, of winning port; her pinion'd wings 125
Hung loose, and glitter'd to the sparkling ray.
A veil fair-mantling, o'er her glossy limbs
Flow'd careless down, and swimming to the breeze,
Heightned the ivory polish.— In her hand,
The lute of voice melodious, thro' the trees 130
Low-murmuring waved; and on her moistned lips
The Graces dropt ambrosia. Gradual on
She came, and shew'd her charms all heav'nly fair,
Full to th' astonish'd gaze; and from the gate
Wide-opening, rush'd her loud-exulting train. 135
A joyous tribe, that thro' the mazy dance
Harmonious skimm'd in aery ring; gay-robed,

As the fair people of a vernal noon,
That sport, and humming ply th' aerial wing.

ONE mid the circling throng superior trod, 140

And claim'd their homage; yet his cheek retain'd
The fading rose of youth, that ere its prime
Disease had wither'd, as th' expanding bud,
Smit by pale-Lightning's beauty-blasting wing,
Untimely droops, and quivering threats a fall, 145

Ere Autumn's rude breath bare the leafy bough.

Yet reeling from the feast, his eyes announced
Intemperate joy, though slow-corroding Care
Sat on his front. Behind him crawl'd the step
Of feeble Age; a Sire, whose ragged brow, 150

Time's gradual plough-share deepening as it roll'd,
Had mark'd with furrows; and his palsied limbs
Bent, as he totter'd o'er the rustling lawn.

The rest laugh'd loud, Mirth with frolic sport
Danced on their dimpling cheek: light to the voice 155

Of the soft lute, all-loose they roved along,

Where young-eyed Pleasure led their step, elate,

And heedless of the road. The blooming Fair,

Now smiling charm'd them; now her stealing lay

Thrill'd to the soul. Along the flowery path 160

Careless they follow'd; till aghast they view'd
The headlong precipice, and check'd their course,
Sudden and starting, mark'd the howling wild.

YET soon the danger vanish'd; the bleak scene,
Familiar frown'd no more: though to the brink 165
One came, and foundering, tumbled as he gazed;
Another run, flood, totter'd, reel'd, and fell;
Yet still the croud precipitate press'd on,
Fearless of death. Some to their bosoms clasp'd
The rosy-featured maid, whose beating veins 170
Throbb'd with soft tumult, and her downy cheek
Glow'd to the warm embrace. Some snatch'd the cup
Where the wine sparkled, and with eager thirst
Quaff'd its delicious poison. Some retired,
Far in the dark wood's deep recess, explored 175
Its windings wild, and led the willing Pair
To bowers where Nature weaved th' entangling shrub
In mazes intricate; that scarce the breeze
Was heard to murmur, and the Sun's weak eye
Look'd glimmering thro' the gloom. 'Twas all a scene 180
Of sport, and frolic dance, and laughing joy.

P R O V I D E N C E.

151

LONG o'er the lillied plain I cast my eye,
 Long mark'd the croud that roam'd delighted on;
 Alternate transport, pity, love and fear,
 Work'd in my bosom. Dubious as I stood,
 The Sire benignant smiled, and thus resumed.

185

Lo! from thy heav'n-illumined glance, the mist,
 That veils from mortal man, the Powers unseen
 Who prompt to vice, is vanish'd! Raise thy fight
 From yon black cloud, and mark what forms appear.

190

I LOOK'D, and hovering o'er the flowery turf
 Were seen innumerable shapes, whose wings
 Waved on the wind, or o'er the glittering field
 Who trod in silence. Care with lowering brow
 Slow stalk'd; and Slander, speckled as the snake
 That stings th' unwary traveller, along
 The tainted earth trail'd loose; or borne on wings
 Blue as the brimstone's gleam, in secret shot
 Her poison'd arrows; pining Envy gnaw'd
 A blasted laurel, from the locks of Fame
 Snatch'd, as the Goddess to her lips applied
 Her mighty trump, and swell'd a solemn note

195

200

To Homer's † venerable name.— Not far
 Stood Discord foaming. Riot double-tongued,
 And gleaming Frenzy, and thy yellow wing 205
 Revenge, fell fiend! shook plagues, and thro' the breast
 Infused their venom to the inmost soul.
 O'er all Disease her beauty-withering wand
 Waved high; and heaving on the heavy air
 Her raven-pinions; bloated as she sail'd 210
 The face of Nature. Shapeless was her form,
 And void; the Owl's ill-omen'd eyes high-raised,
 Speckled her front; her nostrils breathed a cloud;
 Pale Famine's fallow hand had scoop'd her cheek;
 And a green viper form'd her forked tongue. 215
 Her wings the rank fen's putrid steam composed,
 Condensed to solid. All her form below,
 Ended in fiery basilisks, and snakes,
 And scorpions dropping venom.— Slow she moved
 Along the troubled air; and from a bag, 220
 (Wrought deep by Envy in her midnight den)

† Swell'd a solemn note to Homer's, &c.] This refers (as the intelligent reader will observe) to the mean attempts of some critics, who, because they cannot reach the sphere of Homer, would pull down this great genius to their own level.

Scatter'd the seeds of death. The sparkling bowl
Received them now ; and now th' enfeebled corse,
Lank, open, spent, at each unfolding pore
Suck'd in the poison, as it rose decay'd, 225
Livid, and weak, from Pleasure's loose embrace.

Soon o'er each withering cheek, the baleful Power
Had spread unseen her life-consuming stain ;
Nor knew th' exulting Youth, who quaff'd elate
The draught delicious ; that untimely frost 230
Lurk'd by the springs of life ; and secret chill'd
The florid blood, and mark'd him for the tomb.

At last with weak step came the trembling Sage,
Haggard, and shrinking from the breeze ; his voice
Was deep, and hollow ; and the loose nerves shook - 235
His silver-sprinkled head. He thus began.

“ O yet, while Heav'n suspends your doom, be wise,
“ My Sons ! O cease to listen to the lore
“ Of Pleasure ! Death attends her forward step ;
“ And peril lays the sure though secret snare. 240
“ Hear then the words of Age : Yet Fate bestows
“ One hour ; yet Virtue with indulgent voice
“ By

" By me invites to shun the devious maze
 " Of Error:—Yet to crown with length of days,
 " With joy, with happiness, your bold career. 245
 " She hopes! O snatch the proffer'd boon! be roused;
 " E'er her strong arm tremendous, at your heads
 " Shall launch th' avenging thunder: e'er dismay'd,
 " Perplex'd, bewilder'd, wild; you seek the haunt
 " Of Peace, when Darkness veils her lowly cot; 250
 " And mourn her gentle smile for ever gone."

CHIEF on the youth whose bloom the mildew'd blast
 Of fell Disease had stain'd; the words of Age
 Impress'd conviction; starting from his dream,
 He paused a moment, dubious as he mused, 255
 From pleasure's flowery path to turn serene,
 With aim determin'd; or yet lingering, share
 Her rich repast, and wait some future hour.

Him thus half-rouzed, the soul-enchanting Fair
 Beheld: the ruby deepened on her lip, 260
 And keener radiance sparkled in her eye.
 Bare as the throbbing bosom to his view
 Tumultuous heaved; (the raven-colour'd hair
 Shaded its snowy white) all-loose she sprung

Back from the wood. The mantling veil clung round 265
 Her polish'd limbs, and show'd the beauteous frame,
 Shaped by the hand of Harmony, and robed
 By all the Graces; to the lawless glance
 Of youth, that wandering o'er her countless charms
 Stray'd lost in transport. With a smile that thrill'd 270
 His inmost soul, she charm'd him to her lore;
 Then ardent, clasping to her swelling breast
 His form high-kindling, with the voice of Love
 Waked the soft feelings of the melted soul.

WHAT then to calm enraptured thought, avail'd 275
 Slow-judging Age? Impatient of controul;
 And fired to rage at Pleasure's whisper'd call;
 The bright reversion of his rich domains
 Glanced quick on Passion's fiery-streaming eye,
 And rouzed to frenzy.—By the silver hair 280
 He dragg'd the helpless Sire, while yet weak life
 Leap'd in his bosom; to the shaggy rock!
 (The gay companions of his frolic hours
 Lent willing aid) and hurl'd him headlong down;
 Regardless of his wail! I saw his hands, 285
 His withered hands to grasp the steady knee
 In vain extended! heard the suppliant voice,

Remote,

Remote, as in some deep and hollow cave
 Howls the low wind! and mark'd the wild eye, roll'd
 In deep unutterable woe!—Despair, 290
 Pity, and Anguish wrung my tortured heart
 By turns, that wish'd a dagger might avenge
 The ruffian-deed.—The Power of thought beheld
 Sedate the mix'd emotions, and began.

LEAVE thou to Heav'n the wretch whose impious hand 295
 Has foil'd the locks of venerable Age:
 And hurl'd his Sire untimely to the tomb.
 Disease thou seest and Death & already wait

To

[*& Disease thou seest and Death, &c.*] As this book opens with a complaint of the miseries to which human life is exposed, partly from the diseases which are incident to man; and partly from the calamities of another kind to which his life is exposed; it is replied here in answer to the first, that no argument can lye against Providence from this consideration, because Diseases are generally the consequences of some species of intemperance. That many excellent moral ends are effectuated by these, is a truth, which the experience of individuals will not permit us to question. Yet it is certain in general, that as distempers are intailed upon the most robust constitution by irregularity and excess; so persons who are originally tender and delicate, will not only preserve constant health,

To seize their victim. On the dizzy verge
Of Time he stands unpitied; and the Power
Impatient o'er him waves his sweeping scythe.

YET warn'd, behold what danger marks the path
Of high-brow'd Opulence! Intemperance,
The fruitful parent of Disease, behind
Reels loose, and silent plants th' entangling snare.
Oft, when to vengeance roused, th' Eternal dooms
Some wretch to misery extreme; He grants
The fervent wish; He gives th' insatiate eye
To rove transported o'er its golden store;
The heart to swell like Xerxes, when he view'd
His hosts that wrapt th' immeasurable plain;

health, but will even retrieve a broken constitution by regularity and temperance. It is therefore unreasonable to accuse Providence, as if it inflicted those diseases as punishments, which are really the natural consequences of our own conduct.

^h *Oft when to vengeance roused, &c.*] This

———*Numinibus vota exaudita malignis;*

as Juvenal phrases it, is a truth confirmed by experience, and affords as strong a proof of the weakness of the human mind, and of its insufficiency to judge of the ways of Providence, as any that can be adduced.

And

And triumph'd in his power. Thus fares the wretch,
 As whirl'd by Passion, thro' Life's dusty field
 He bursts exulting. On the drooping head¹
 Of Merit, shy to censure, and repress'd
 By decent Pride from murmuring; his rude hand
 Arrests the palm. He gains it; and adored
 By Folly's wondering train, presumptuous shapes
 His course; 'till like a canker at the root,
 That secret riots on the vital stream,
 Slow, but sure-wasting Fate in silence takes
 Th' inevitable aim; and spares the hand
 Of hoary Time his silver, and his scythe.

O WEAK! thro' Passion's erring glass to view,
 What cooler thought condemns! Think'st thou the man
 By birth exalted, by the lavish hand
 Of Fortune crown'd with honour, whose gay hours
 Dance to the melting lute's melodious lay,
 Is happy?—Know thy wandering search mistakes
 The shade for substance. Could thy thought explore
 The mind within; what real ills excite

¹ *On the drooping head, &c.*] In answer to the question proposed in the beginning, "Tell why the hand of strutting Impudence."

The mental tumult ; to the trembling gaze
Of Fear what Phantoms of imagined woes
Swim thro' the dark night's solemn noon, when sleep
Shakes not her poppies o'er his longing eyes,
That roll in vain ; what inward-eating care
Preys on his pamper'd blood ; what wishes wild ;
What dread of future misery ; what dreams
Of horror gleam athwart the fable scroll
Where Memory prints her records : would the scene
Wake thee to envy ? Would thy wishing soul
Pant for the boon that glitters to the eye,
But stings the heart, and poisons all its joy ?

I READ thy secret doubt :—" 'Tis Guilt that shades"
"The brow of Grandeur ; 'tis the solemn peal
"Of Conscience thundering in the mental ear,
"That wakes to quick sensation. To the dream

l. 'Tis Guilt that shades, &c.]

Evassisse putes quos diri conscia facti

Mens habet attonitos, & furdo verbera cædit ?

Hi sunt qui trepidant, & ad omnia fulgura pallent,

Cum tonat enanimes primo quoque murmure cæli.

Juv. Sat. XIII.

"Of

" Of harmless Innocence, no Demon shakes
 " His front terrific : All is calm within,
 " And tuned to perfect harmony.—Yet Peace 350
 " May dwell with Opulence ; one happy mind
 " May eye rejoicing its extended power
 " To work for man ; exulting as it views
 " A smiling tribe around, snatch'd from the grasp
 " Of ruthless want, and basking in the beam 355
 " Of Joy, to transport kindling, and to love."

'Tis just :—The noble mind by Fortune raised,
 And warm'd by strong benevolence to spread
 Its happiness to all ; displays to man
 His Maker's image. To a godlike Few, 360
 Heav'n gives at once the virtue, and the power ;
 Yet plants not Opulence¹ for these a snare,
 That

¹ *Yet plants not Opulence, &c.*] Though it is to be hoped, that the example of this mentioned in the Allegory will seldom or never happen : yet it is still certain that the prospect of possessing large acquisitions, may suggest to the needy, the voluptuous, the profuse, or the avaricious part of mankind, desires, which never enter into the thought of a person in low, or even in moderate circumstances ; and methods of accomplishing these which reason disapproves. The humorous Satyrists's remark is considered by such men in a very serious light.

That Poverty escapes?—The wretch who dragg'd
His Sire relentless to the tomb;—Say, rose
No boiling passion in his rankled heart?
Felt not his tortured breast the venom'd sting
Of keen Impatience? Flamed not to his eye
Gold, titles, honour; all the tinsel-show,
That on the sullen front of Avarice wakes

Εὐχαι δὲ καταλαβὼν χρονοῦ μὲν οὐκ ἔτι
Τ' ἀρρηκτοῦ ἡμῖν, καὶ τοῦ χρόνου μὲν οὐκ ἔτι
Ἰδυσσάμενος τοὺς γὰρ οὐκ ἔτι
Εὐχαι τὶ βέλτε, πάντα τοῦ χρόνου μὲν οὐκ ἔτι

Of lurking Death, how thro' the form

Before therefore any individual presumes to blame Providence for not having placed him in such a situation as his ambition aspires to; he ought to consider, whether or not such an imaginary benefit (if it was conferred upon him) would not be productive of greater mischief to himself and to society, than the absence of it can possibly be of positive evil to either. But as it is scarce possible, that such an enquiry can be conducted with perfect impartiality, he will probably find examples within the circle of his acquaintance sufficient to convince him, that Affluence cannot confer Felicity; and that an unexpected flow of Prosperity in most instances alters the whole character, and substitutes Pride, Presumption and Petulance, in the place of Humility, Modesty, and that amiable Diffidence, which is commonly characteristic of merit.

A gloomy smile, and bids his little thought
 Receive a gleam of joy?—From these secure
 Lives not untutor'd Indigence at ease?
 And steals unseen along the vale of Life,
 Calm, peaceful, shelter'd from the stormy blast
 That shakes Ambition's plume, that wrecks the hope,
 The quiet of mankind?—What though to these
 The means are scanty?—O'er the roughned cheek
 Health sheds her bloom; their sinews knit by toil
 Robust and firm, support th' allotted weight;
 And gradual loosed by long revolving years,
 Resign their charge, untainted by the seeds
 Of lurking Death, slow thro' the form diffused
 From meals^m that Nature nauseates, from the cup
 Where the wine laughs, and on the mantling cheek

^m From meals, &c.] The inscription on Sardanapalus, the last Assyrian monarch, is pregnant with instruction to this purpose.

Εὐ αἶδος οἱ θεοὶ σφύς, οὐδ' ὀνομασθεῖς

Τετραμενοῖς μεθυσθῆναι. Φαγοῖσι σοὶ θεοὶ ἀρνῶν.

Καὶ γὰρ καὶ σφύς φάγομεν καὶ μεθύμεν καὶ ποθῶμεν.

Ταῦτα γὰρ οὐκ ἀκαθάρτα, καὶ ἁβρῆστα, καὶ πῦλα τῶν θεῶν.

Εὐθὺς ἐκασθῆναι τὰ δὲ λατρεῖν καὶ ποθῆναι καὶ μεθύμεν.

Chrysip. ad Athen. l. viii.

Kindles a transient blush, but works disease; 385

And shades the temple with untimely snow.

Live these unknown within a narrower sphere,

Where plumed Ambition treads not?—If their hopes,

Less ardent, point not to some dazzling aim;

Their fears are fewer: if their power to spread 390

The stream of Happiness o'er all ground,

Suits not, Benevolence, thy boundless will!

Yet less, yet weaker are the tempting snare

That lead to Vice. The man who eyes with pain

Superior Power, or indly-murmuring feels 395

Indignant passion, as he marks the mean,

The weak, the bad, on Fortune's giddy wheel

High-raised; who sees the Miser's hoarded chest

Live these unknown within a narrower sphere, &c.] Cur igitur

Dixit de cetero? aut ubi Paupertas beatus esse non sinit? Signis

credo, tabulis, ludis. Si quis est qui his delectatur, nonne melior

tenues homines fruuntur, quam illi qui his abundant? — Quotidie nos

ipsa Natura admonet quam paucis, quam parvis rebus egeat, quam vi-

libus. Num igitur ignobilitas, aut humilitas, aut etiam popularis offen-

sio sapientem beatum esse prohibebit? — Vide ne plus commendatio in

vulgo, & hæc quæ expetitur gloria molestiæ habeat quam voluptatis.

Tuscul. Quæst. lib. v.

N 2 Lock'd

Lock'd fast, Suspicion scowling on the door;
 Who marks the young Heir joyous from the tomb
 That wraps his Father's bones, with eager gaze
 Devour the shining mammon, and disperse
 The dust long-heap'd to all the rushing winds:
 Then mute and pensive, plans ideal schemes
 Of generous bounty, calls the flitting breath
 From Famine's throbbing lip, or strips the rags
 From Poverty's shrunk back:—Then secret blames
 The depth of God's unfathom'd ways to man;
 Knows not himself; knows not that like the ice
 On Zembla's wintry rocks, the Passions froze
 By the chill blast of Penury would thaw
 Before the Sun's effulgence, streaming wide
 With genial warmth, and from the loosened soil
 Swelling the pois'nous weeds that lurk'd unseen.

THEN ere thy mind, though pining in the shade
 Of Indigence; oft as it eyes the train
 That bask like summer insects in the ray
 Of warm Prosperity;—arraign the doom
 Of Heav'n with justice; first impartial scan
 Each Passion's various power.—Say, when with joy
 Elate, when Pleasure's gentlest smiles allured

Thy yielding heart, when high Ambition rear'd
 Her prize aloft, and pointing, threw'd the goal
 In fight:—what passions else unknown, inspired
 That hour thy kindling thought! The latent sparks
 Of Pride, by mildews damp'd, or sunk in shade,
 Tell how they tower'd in flame! How from his bed,
 Though wrapt in triple midnight; yet awaked,
 Low-thoughted Avarice arose!—The wish
 With worlds unfated; the presumptuous hope
 Dizzy with height, that scans each flitting form
 Impatient of controul;—these if thou knew'st;
 Be Heaven then blest, that in the vale of life
 Kept thee unseen, but innocent; that gave
 No sphere to Passions, whose impetuous sweep
 Had wreck'd thy little bark; denied the glare,
 But gave the calm of pleasure; and remote
 From scenes of tumult, with the hand that spread
 The raven's liberal board, provides for thine.

“ Ah yet, (the pensive deeply-musing mind
 “ Thus told its weak plaint to the murmuring tongue.)
 “ Ah yet, what numbers tread the cheerless haunt
 “ Of pining Anguish! whom the voice of Mirth
 “ Soothes not in all the long-revolving hours

" That roll in slow succession!—What a train 445
 " Of mourners, see their last weak twig of Hope
 " Broke short; and wandering, sigh without a Friend
 " To still the plaint of woe, to pour the balm
 " Of healing comfort on the rankling wound!
 " Avails it ought to these, that Virtue walks 450
 " Calm in the solitary cell? avails
 " Her voice faint-whispering, when the infant looks
 " Pale to the Mother's sorrow-streaming eyes
 " With eager expectation? when the wail
 " Of helpless Innocence, weak, dying, wild, 455
 " Thrills to the heart's crack'd strings? What tho' the thought
 " To noble sentiment expands? The mind,
 " Tho' train'd to virtue, every worthy deed
 " Exalts its kindling powers; and all the man
 " Pants with desire to spread the mighty stream 460
 " Of Happiness around him? Say, what boon,
 " What good rewards his virtue? Are the means
 " Confer'd, to reach his glorious end? Is Power
 " Rent from Oppression's grasp, and to his hand
 " Consign'd; that hence Society may bless 465
 " The generous Master; that the piercing plaint
 " Of Woe may cease, and Indigence relieved,

Stand

“ Stand smiling at his threshold ? Is it thus
“ That Heaven o’erlooks, and Wisdom rules the whole ? ”

Nor always, (thus the Sire rejoin’d) reward
Awaits a virtuous deed ; nor God bestows,
Nor man deserves it :—Yet th’ Eternal works
To noble ends.—He spoke, and turn’d his eye
Where Fancy stood. The Goddess to his look
Obsequious waved her wand, and all the scene
Was changed, and silent Wonder lock’d my tongue.

For lo ! responsive to her will, the wood
Before me opening wide, disclosed a bleak
And trackless desert ; where the birds of Night
Shrill-screaming pour’d the melancholy wail,
Or dimly-hovering plied the boding wing.

Slow from the mount’s high summit, whence the scene
Had glow’d around me, the superior Power
Led to the solitary waste. Behind,
I passed dejected ; thro’ my chilling veins
Dark Horror quivering shook the slackned knee.
Quick from the wild waste’s gloomy face I turn’d
My eyes with joy to mark the balmy groves,

The wood's deep umbrage, and the glittering domes,
 Where Nature shower'd luxuriance. But the scene
 Was barr'd from human step. Where the green wood
 But late had opened, and its utmost bound
 Join'd to the desert: thro' the hollow'd ground,
 Broad, deep and billowy, hurst a turbid stream
 With torrent-rore; and on its rapid tide,
 Light whirl'd the mountain's sturdy sons, the rock,
 In broken fragments; and the feeble mounds
 Of Art's neglected labour.—Inly-pain'd,
 I traced the Sire's slow footstep, and beheld
 Far in the gloomy waste, one lonely cot,
 Screen'd from the bustling din of busy man;
 Where Beauty smiled not, and the Blast's wild wing
 Bore not the City's hum. The rough heath form'd
 Its simple roof; the dark o'er shading pines
 Behind, by Toil's assiduous hand arranged,
 Mellow'd the chill East's nipping breath, and check'd
 'The Tempest's swelling voice that whistled thro'
 Before, a casement gave the trembling beam,
 That dimly glimmer'd o'er the channel'd floor
 But shew'd a cultured field, by Industry
 Manured, and waving to th' autumnal gale

A GLEAM of joy o'erspread the placid mind ;
 Pleased, as it mark'd rude Labour's finewy hand
 Triumph o'er Nature's roughness, and diffuse
 Thy smile, fair Plenty, o'er the pathless wild.

Thus soothed I eyed the field ; when to the plain
 Walk'd out the Shepherd from his simple cheer ;
 And call'd his flock, that bleating as they ranged,
 Sought the warm shelter of a neighbouring fold,
 To ease their weary limbs. In his mild eye
 Beam'd heart-felt Innocence ; serene he raised
 His look to Heav'n, unconscious of the crime,
 That points Reflection's quiver'd shaft with stings
 Severe, and aims them at the guilty heart.
 Vigorous he trod, as in the prime of years,
 When Life's gay spring resigns the sporting youth
 To firmer manhood ; and the bloom of Health,
 Fresh as the Morning's silver-sprinkled robe,
 Swells on his mellow cheek. With easy step
 He pass'd deep-musing, where the rustling boughs
 Light-wavering, o'er the yellow-fringed green
 Shook the loose radiance of the western ray.
 A pipe, melodious as the melting note
 Of warbling Philomel, press'd by his lips,

Then

Then pour'd its sweet breath on the wings of Eve 535
 Harmonious. From the many-colour'd Choir
 Gay-glittering, stream'd the emulating lay,
 Swell'd in a thousand quivering throats; the strains
 To heav'n ascending, as the general voice
 Of Nature, rising in the hymn of praise. 540
 ROUZED by the song, around the smiling Swain
 Were ranged an happy Family. His wife,
 Fair as the rose, when first the blushing Spring
 Sprinkles its balmy leaf with moist'ning dew;
 Sat near him, decent in the rural robe 545
 Of native Elegance; no floating lawn,
 Refined by study, and the ceaseless care
 Of Luxury high-pamper'd, o'er her form
 Wanton'd in airy folds: her simple dress,
 By artless modesty design'd, improved 450
 The gifts of Nature. Careless on her knee
 An infant play'd, and wondering eyed with smiles
 The strangers warbling from th' aerial bough,
 And eager join'd responsive. To her breast
 She clasp'd the boy in extacy of thought, 455
 And kiss'd his little cheek. The others danced
 Elate and emulous around their Sire.

By these secure of happiness, no joy or aid :
 Was sought, that warms the beating heart, or wakes
 The soul to transport. — In the lonely wild
 Where musing Solitude resides; her cell
 Oft whispering, echoes to the gentle voice
 Of Peace, and glitters to her silver ray.

His pipe untuned, the Sire with gladdened heart
 Arose to range the desert, and indulge
 The calm of placid thought. — Not far he walk'd,
 When feebly-sounding thro' the whistling boughs
 Was hear'd weak Sorrow's dying moan, that sunk
 In hollow murmurs on the startled ear.

Abrupt, the Shepherd to the trembling note
 Turn'd quick; Compassion touch'd the feeling heart,
 And gave her mild beam to the pitying eye.
 At last arrived, his eager-searching view
 Saw where dishonour'd on the forded earth,
 Pale, faint, and trembling in the grasp of death;
 Was laid a helpless victim! The rude hand
 Of wasting Misery had thrunk his veins;
 And in the hollow of his livid cheek
 Sat Famine pictured. Struggling as he heard
 The tread of human feet; his heavy eyes

580

Just

By

Just heaved; his voice low-muttering in a groan
 Its purposed word; surrounding darkness veil'd
 His sight; and shivering on the edge of death,
 He claim'd immediate aid. Soft from the ground,
 (Each gentler feeling of the soul awaked)
 The Shepherd rais'd him with parental care;
 And bore him tender, where the fresher gale
 Recall'd the weakly-flitting pulse, and oped
 To life the leaden eyelid.—At his call,
 Dispatchful with assiduous care they brought
 A cordial balm, that to his lips applied;
 Quench'd o'er his form restored, the clammy dew
 Of Death, and braced with strength the glowing limbs.

THE man rekindling, as from some wild dream
 The soul starts sudden, and transported, sees
 The headlong precipice dissolve: with joy
 Beheld around the tribe of busy friends
 Benevolent; and call'd the Stranger's God
 To bless their labours; on their little field
 To shower propitious plenty; and command
 Sweet Peace to tend their cottage.—“Not to me,
 “ (Replied the Sire sedate) thy fervent prayer
 “ Belongs

"Belongs; for Virtue bids th' exulting thought
 "Reward a worthy deed. Look to the power,
 "Who from his seraph-circled throne, beyond
 "The ken of human glance; with willing ears
 "Stoops to the plaint of Anguish. Be thy vows
 "By Him accepted; be thy life restored,
 "To bless thy friends, to heal with lenient balm
 "The wounded heart; to bid the needy rise;
 "And cloath in mantling smiles the cheek of Woe."

[*Virtue bids th' exulting thought, &c.*] The boasted self-sufficiency of Virtue in the sense which is here assigned to it, may be considered as consonant to the dictates of reason. As it is the natural consequence of some vices to entail diseases on the body; and of all, to give pain to the mind upon reflection; so a good action in some measure rewards itself, by the pleasure with which at every period of life it is contemplated by the mind. In some sense indeed it may be said that a benevolent deed (excluding every consideration of a future state) is rewarded in the amplest manner, even in this world; as the man who performs it, enjoys for one single action of his life, a perpetual source of pleasure as often as he reflects on it. Yet if we extend the idea of Felicity a little further, and include under it those other advantages which are commonly and justly included in it in the general estimation; we shall find that Virtue alone is far from being subservient to all the purposes which it is supposed to accomplish: and that a man may be honest, who is not happy.

He said: and inly-smiling, as the scene
 Rose to delighted memory: hither,
 Led to his cottage. As they walk'd, his guest
 Inform'd, eate of heart, that from his home
 Wide-wandering, o'er the pathless waste he stray'd;
 Nor look'd for shelter, till his weary limbs
 Claim'd the reposing pillow. All around,
 Then roll'd his wishing eyes; but nought was seen,
 Save the grey cloud that touch'd the distant hills;
 And wilds of cheerless Solitude. Perplex'd,
 With busy care his long-protracted search
 Explored a path; but all his search was vain.
 Then desolate of heart, he stood alone,
 All helpless. O'er his feeble frame distill'd
 The reeking moisture; and the tears of woe
 Stain'd his wan cheek. Afar the gleaming trees
 Were seen. His weak limbs dragg'd their weight along
 Tottering: and reach'd the distant haunt; and sunk
 Oppress'd: his voice short-panting, heaved a groan;
 Then faintly quiver'd.—“’Twas the hand of God
 “That led thee to the spot; ’twas He who waked
 “The light of Pity in thy gentle heart;
 “And sent thee angel-like to speak the Power
 “Who fills the desert as the haunt of man.”

Thus talking to the sylvan bower they came:
Then to his family the swain consign'd
His charge, to taste of hospitable rites,
And share refreshing sleep. His evening walk
Resum'd, he wander'd onward, where the trees
Disjoin'd the landkip from the barren wild.

As to some simple swain, whose happy days
Had stole serene in innocence; by chance
Some treasure hoarded in the rock's cleft side
Just peeps; the ragged stones withhold his hand
That grasps to reach it: his devouring gaze
Gleams on the pile; his busy fancy forms
Gay dreams of Grandeur, happiness till now
Unknown, unsought; his murmuring mind repines;
He works impatient, and indignant spurns
His former state, poor, abject, mean, despised.
So fared the thought-wrapt swain. Awhile he mark'd
The gay-robed villa floating to the breeze
In loosen'd luxury; the airy mount,
The pile gay glimmering thro' the visted groves,
Or downward glittering in the headlong stream.
Then nearer to his sight the sporting train
Appear'd; sweet music rapt his wishing soul;

His

His blood danced lightly, and his bustling thoughts
Swim'd on the maze of Harmony. Awhile
He eyed the scene perplex'd, and thus began.

“ Ah ! what to gain bright Pleasure's genial smile
“ Avails the pride of Virtue ? Rough and hard,
“ Amidst enangling thorns her rugged road
“ Lies pathless. Labour is the envied meed
“ Her hand confers; and near her Poverty
“ Sits shivering. Dark are Heav'n's mysterious ways.
“ —Yet whence this pause ?—Yon cooling shades invite
“ My step; to man's assiduous toil, the palm
“ Of Happiness is yielded. Indolence
“ O'erlooks the mark; and sleepy dreams of bliss,
“ When Reason calls to action. Lives not Peace,
“ Reigns not fair Virtue in these happy groves
“ She reigns ! 'tis bigot fear that from her train
“ Would chase the pleasures. Should my search be crown'd
“ With conquest; riches, honour, power conferr'd:
“ The Stranger's lips shall bless me.—Should I fall;
“ To dare is noble.—Let me try.”—He spoke,
And plunged amid the stream, and stemm'd its tide
With nervous arm. Light o'er the swelling waves
Awhile he sails triumphant. On his view,

Each moment widening breaks the beauteous scene
 With heightned pomp; and now its spicy bank
 Perfumes the whispering gale. The people pour 683
 Thro' the dark wood; and to his ardent gaze
 Young Pleasure radiant as the star of Eve
 Extends a golden circlet. But the tide
 Breaks o'er him; and the rough stones ragged sides
 Roll'd down the current, tear his shatter'd limbs, 696
 Or check his meditated course, or turn
 His aim abrupt: and now his dizzy brain
 Wheels, thro' his nostrils darts the flashing stream:
 He pants by fits, and starting grasps for air!
 Then whirls, and sinks precipitate. The waves 698
 Close round him. Snatch'd at once from life, from joy;
 From sweet domestic quiet; from his home,
 Where the weak infant round a widow's neck
 Clasp'd its young arms: afar the Father lay
 In Death's cold grasp. The throbbing heart that thrill'd 709
 Humane, to Misery's desponding wail;
 Forgot each gentler feeling; and his eyes
 Wrapt in dark shade, were closed to wake no more.

ARE these, Benevolence, the great rewards
 Of noble deeds? thus gains th' expanded heart

705

That pants for others good, the generous aim,
 By godlike Piety inspired ; nor dash'd
 By Reason's cool research that weighs the means ?
 Stand Death's grim front full in the rugged porch
 Where Virtue leads her sons, in act to pierce 710
 The breast that melts to sympathetic woe :
 While Vice stalks flow, and with contemptuous leer
 At ease beholds them ?—From the thought of man
 How deeply screen'd are Heav'n's unfathom'd ways !

Thus wildly-wavering, roll'd the dubious mind 715
 From thought to thought, uncertain where its search
 Should end. Yet from my lips, no whisper'd plaint
 Told its weak muttering. But Attention rapt
 The listening ear, when thus the Sage resumed.

SAY weeps not pity o'er yon mournful scene 720
 In softned anguish ? Let the copious stream
 Burst from thy feeling heart. The manly tear
 Belongs to virtue. Be the wretch accursed,
 Whose bosom melts not to another's woe.

YET know, what man's false guess mistakes for ill, 725
 In God's unbounded plan, promotes the good

Of All; and as of All, the separate bliss
Of Individuals. As the man whose thought
Explores with deep design the secret springs
That work the heart; can coolly trace the Cause, 730
While Folly wonders on th' Effect; and light,
Skims the smooth face of Life's deceitful stream:
So God, whose instant glance surveys a Whole,
Where human Wisdom to one link confined,
Glimmers; with boundless reach P adjusts the means 735
To

P With boundless reach, &c.] Thus Aristotle says of the Divine Mind,
Αλλα τέλο ην το θεοειδον το μελα ρατωσης, και απλης κινησως παυλο-
δαπας αποτελειν ιδεας, ωσπερ αμελει δρῶσιν οι Μεγαλωτεροι δια μιας
οργανου χαστηριας, πολλας και ποικιλας ενεργειας αποτελουσινες,
De Mun. This description of the Deity is conformable to what is said
of Him in the sacred writings. Cicero appears to have had it in his eye,
when he says, Nec vero Deus ipse qui intelligitur a nobis; alio modo in-
telligi potest; nisi mens soluta quædam, & libera; segregata ab omne
concretionem mortali; omnia sentiens, & movens, &c. Tusc. Quæst. lib. i.
It is proper to observe here, that the author ought not to be mistaken,
as if in this, and in some other parts of the work, he intended to de-
preciate human reason below its proper value; and to represent it as
inadequate to purposes, which it is able to effectuate. The preced-
ing,

To boundless knowledge. Hence the wildering maze
 Where Reason gropes in darkness. Hence the tear
 On Pity's kindling cheek, that speaks the man,
 Tho' weak, yet virtuous †; noble in the deed
 That marks his imperfection. As a man, 740

ing, and some other quotations from the Ancients, are inserted principally to shew, that Philosophers who were led by the light of Nature, conceived just ideas of the Supreme Being, both as to his natural and moral attributes. We mean therefore only to say, that this faculty, like a fine telescope, shews the compleat proportions of every object, which is placed within its sphere; but when it is employed to survey such as are too complicated of texture, or too distant in their position, it represents these obscurely, and gives the eye no just idea of their nature or dimensions.

† *Tho' weak, yet virtuous.*] Weak in this instance, because perhaps he is lamenting as an evil, what ought really to be considered as an advantage; and virtuous at the same time, because this amiable feeling is in Him commendable. There is indeed sometimes an high degree of Virtue discovered in the suppression of pity. Thus Virgil, as an instance of the fortitude and resolution of Æneas, says, that when this hero was implored in the most passionate manner to continue with Dido,

Mens immota manet; lacrymæ volvuntur inanes. *Æneid. IV.*

He

He feels, he weeps, where the Superior Power
 Would triumph; should he smile, his smile were more,
 Or less than human. Yet be Reason cool,
 While Passion melts. Thou saw'st a joyous tribe,
 Gay Pleasure's aery sons, amid the grove 745
 Loose-wandering: Nature shower'd her richest spoils
 To bless with new delight each circling hour.

Thou saw'st a wretch yet reeking with the blood
 Of Age, a Father's blood; thou saw'st him left
 Careless, to riot in his wealth; the crime 750
 By heav'n unpunish'd; save where Conscience stings
 The guilty heart, or what the fiery breath
 Of burning Fever kindles in the veins.

IN Poverty's low cell thou saw'st a Sire,
 Train'd to rough work, to labour, to the toil 755

¹ *He weeps, where the superior Power, &c.]* From the frailty of human nature, which is unable to trace remote consequences, he is deeply affected with incidents which, to a superior Being who was capable to see further into futurity, would afford reason for exultation and triumph.

² *Save where Conscience stings, &c.]* These were formerly mentioned as the natural consequences of Vice, supposing a state of future rewards and punishment to be out of question. See p. 153, l. 330, &c.

Of hardy Virtue; yet his feeling soul
 Thrill'd to the plaint of helpless woe; the tear
 Of Anguish ceased before him. Age was rais'd,
 Respected, favour'd, and its prayer preferr'd,
 In vain!—Yon stream has whelm'd him, and his eyes 769
 Are closed for ever.—Art thou pierced?—Attend.

IN man's short reach of mind †, the Power that scans
 External forms, that marks the living bloom
 Of Nature; whose quick-glance can see the bounds
 Of moral good and ill, as these assume 765

† *In man's short reach of mind, &c.*] In the series of philosophical observations, which follow from this verse till near the end of the book, the two preceding allegories are explained in such a manner, as to throw some light on the conduct of Providence with regard to human Life: at least the author attempted to do this.—In illustrating a subject which opens so wide a field of Conjecture, he has endeavoured to keep Probability in his eye as closely as possible; and to assign some causes (not incongruous to reason) for which Virtue is exposed to sufferings, and Vice is permitted to riot in temporary pleasure. This is attempted in answer to the second part of the Complaint in the beginning of this book, relating to the apparently unequal distribution of Reward and Punishment, which takes place in this life. Whether these remarks are as satisfactory, as they are new (at least in their present connection) to the author, the judicious reader must be left to determine.

Their

Their spheres in social intercourse, and join
 To colour Life; yet while it strays abroad,
 And gleans a scanty harvest from the field
 Of others, knows not what is felt at home.

Thus calm Experience in the past beholds 770

The future : thus from Life's perplexing scenes
 She culls the noblest precepts, to direct

The step of youth ; while yet th' important part,
 The Mind, remains unknown. Th' internal eye,

Though quick to point each folly-featured form 775

That strikes its gaze, yet marks not, as they rise,
 The passions ^u height'ning into flame, nor sees

What

^u *Marks not, as they rise, the passions, &c.*] This is universally the case, when the progress of the passions is not accurately marked, or when opportunities of calling these into action do not occur in early life. A man who has acquired no knowledge of this nature from experience, or who has not marked the progressive steps by which any passion acquires a mastery over his mind, will be utterly incapable to judge of the latent principles which would influence his conduct, if by the circumstances of life they were brought into exercise; and of the manner in which his conduct would be directed in a new situation, by the passions, which most forcibly influence his actions in common occurrences. It is however absolutely necessary that he should be fully acquainted with both these (as we

What sparks lie latent in th' unfeeling mind,
That want their fuel; nor th' extent of those
Half-raised, and kindling to a rapid blaze. 789

Hence oft in Life's still scenes * the untutor'd mind
Mistakes its ruling principle. The man
Who

(shall shew afterwards) before he can be qualified in any measure to challenge the dispensations of Providence.

* *Hence oft in Life's still scenes, &c.*] This observation, however paradoxical it may appear at first view, will, upon closer enquiry, be found conformable to truth. It is commonly thought that a man's ruling Passion is discovered in his actions, as soon as he is capable of forming any consistent process of reasoning, and to distinguish objects in the matters of ordinary life. This may be true of such men as are born with remarkable genius, or of those to whom affluence early supplies the means of gratifying desire: but in lower life, that Passion will be considered as predominant, whose demands are answered with the greatest facility; while others, which might perhaps be equally or even more forcible, are permitted to remain inactive, because they are not stimulated by proper objects. Thus let us suppose a man placed in mean circumstances, who has in his mind the seeds both of Ambition and Avarice: it is obvious, that as his pittance of wealth, however scanty, will afford some exercise to the latter, while the former is totally neglected from the despair of gratifying

Who wastes his calm hours in the vale of ease,
 Nor dreams of higher bliss, not therefore wants
 Ambitious aim; but distant from his view, 785
 Its object strikes not his averted sight,
 Nor breaks the calm within. Is he then good,
 Just, pious, happy, innocent, humane?
 Fired by no hope, by no temptation sway'd,
 Of power to shake firm Virtue's steady base, 790
 His course by thought improved, confirm'd by time,
 Becomes habitual; if he swerves, yet Fear
 Recalls the erring wanderer to his home:
 As some lone traveller, perplex'd and wild,
 Beholds with joy his former path, and springs 795
 Elate to reach it. But when higher scenes
 Rush on the wondering mind, and wake the sparks
 Of some young Passion, smother'd, not denied;
 Who then from past experience stands secure,

justifying its desires, he will naturally consider that passion as principal, which
 a constant habit of indulgence has called into perpetual action. Should
 this man, at any future period of life, find himself raised to opulence, he
 may discover that he had mistaken the bias of his mind; and that the de-
 sire of acquisition, which he supposed principally to characterise it, hath
 been employed as a tool to effectuate the purposes of that latent Ambition
 which will then be predominant.

As

As he who eyed yon smiling scene, and plunged 800
 Rash in the billowy stream, elate of heart;
 Who sees his will still opening, as his power
 To spread extends in Fancy's ardent gaze,
 Still wants to know himself. What tho' the mind
 Tried, yet victorious, from th' insidious snare 805
 Escapes?—The strength that laid Patroclus low,
 Match'd not Achilles. Has the man subdued
 Inferior passions?—Give Temptation power;
 Lay the bright Phantom in the lap of Ease
 All-languishing; and bid the smiles of Love 810
 Dimple the florid cheek. Let Pleasure stand
 Close by her side, and bid the circling wreath
 Of Honour grace her forehead: let the veil
 Drop off; expose the beauteous form, illumed
 By joy, and balmy as the citron grove, 815
 That breathes delicious fragrance. Would he then
 Still firm retain his fortitude? still shun
 Her lips, nor feel the stimulating power
 Of Nature stir within him? Ah, what tears
 Were thine, fair Virtue, for thy sliding son! 820

If such is Reason's calm impartial voice;
 Then blames it Wisdom's just decree, that wills

The

The good to suffer: thus rash-judging man
 Miscalls their happiness) far from the snare,
 The tempting snare of Vice to live at ease, 825
 Serene, tho' humble in Life's lowly scenes?
 Or when by wholesome discipline recall'd
 From Error's devious maze back to the path
 Of Truth;—then deems it that the stream of Woe
 Bathes but the cheek of Virtue? that the doom 830
 Of Heav'n, unequal, to the just, assigns
 Affliction; on the bad, profusely showers
 Wealth, honour, happiness. If Reason speaks
 The man, whose days like some smooth-gliding stream
 Had past unruffled by the rough'ning gale, 835
 Unfit to bear affliction; to repel
 The Fiend, when sailing in the loosen'd robe
 Of Pleasure, all th' inviting scene awaked
 Desires unknown before:—then when the Power
 Who form'd him, marks declining Virtue loose 840
 On Folly's verge, and tottering to a fall;
 Should He then snatch him from th' impending ill,
 Shall man impeach his justice? shall the mind
 Now see the Foe, and shuddering as it eyes,
 Recoil with horror; yet when higher Power 845

Descends

Descends to save him from th' insidious snare,
 Or tear him from its grasp, repining breathe
 Its impious plaint, * and deem the strength it fear'd
 But late, unequal; when th' eternal Sire
 Consents, confirms its dictate; to the work 850
 Alone sufficient; and the great decree

* *Repining breathe its impious plaint, &c.*] Upon the principles established in this series of observation, complaints of the distributions of Providence must appear in almost every case to be highly unreasonable. A man who is unacquainted with the powers of his own mind, can have no reason to conclude from his having obtained a victory over some temptations, which were not perhaps calculated to inflame the passions in any high degree, that he will overcome such as are less easy to be subdued; and his confidence of being able to stand a trial of this nature, founded upon his past experience, is the dictate of "that Pride which usually cometh before a Fall." When therefore the Supreme Being, instead of complying with the demand of Presumption, sees it expedient to tutor such a man by the scourge of Adversity, or removes from him a temptation by which he might have been seduced into the paths of error; Reason will certainly lead him rather to distrust himself, than to repine at Providence. It will suggest to him examples in the case of others, in which the gratification of Desire hath produced the most pernicious effects; and from proper ideas of the Justice and Wisdom of the Deity, it will inspire him with sentiments of resignation and gratitude.

Of Wisdom partial or unjust? Thus man,
 Still weak, still wavering; from th' uncertain poise
 Of powers opposed, as now slow Reason moves,
 Or Passion sinks the scale; approves, or blames; 855
 The sport of varying Faculties!—He weeps,
 Repines and reasons, censures and adores:
 (Like Childhood soothed, and smiling thro' its tears)
 But errs in all. Heaven with determined aim
 Proceeds, regardless of his frowns or praise, 860
 His pain, or pleasure; as th' impartial will
 Of Wisdom dictates, and maintains the whole.

YET why, thy thought demands, when Virtue feels
 Thy yoke, severe Adversity! why reigns
 Triumphant Vice, nor dreads th' avenging doom 865
 Of Heav'n; but wanton in the spoils of power,
 Sports in gay frolic down the tide of Time,
 Nor dreams of future woe?—Is he then blest
 Alone, who riots in the feast; who fails
 Loose in the robe of Luxury, and bears 870
 His front to Heav'n, as if his mind defied
 Its frown?—Ah blind to reason! whose weak thought
 Sees not, the just severity that saves

The

The Good γ , reclaims not Error. To persist
 Firm in the path of right, when all within, 875
 Is calm; or wandering from its side; to start,
 Alarm'd in time by some awakening voice;
 To turn is easy.—But the man whose step
 Far thro' the devious waste has wander'd wild,
 Regains not, seeks not to regain the path 880
 Long lost; his course by Perseverance form'd,
 His doubts by habit reconciled. What once
 He wish'd, now self-deceived, his willing mind
 Receives as substance; and the Phantom mocks
 With empty smiles his void embrace no more. 885

REPINES then muttering thy presumptuous tongue,
 That Heav'n's suspended wrath allows the wretch

γ The just severity that saves the good, &c.] Having attempted in the preceding reflections to assign some reasons for which Virtue is permitted to suffer, we proceed to enquire why Vice is in many cases apparently rewarded with Prosperity. The answer to this question, is, that as a bad man cannot be reclaimed from his errors by the same adversity which saves a good man from being misled by them; and as immediate perdition must be the consequence of supposing him cut off in the career of Vice; no argument can therefore lie against the Wisdom or Justice of God; because in the former case, he exhibits a proof of parental affection; and, in the latter, is not actuated by caprice or resentment.

An hour to triumph? that the God who counts
His number'd years a moment, at thy call
Points not his thunder to the guilty head ; 890
Nor bids his lightnings flash ? Know, if the Good
Thro' life should suffer ; in that scanty span
Are all his woes compris'd :— If Vice exults,
That span contains its happiness. Should He,
Who pitying snatches from Temptation's snare 895
The Just, as him whom yon devouring wave
Has mantled : should his justice thus have claim'd
The wretch yet reeking from his Father's blood,
An instant victim : as the one enjoys
The prize of Virtue, and no deepening stain 900
Sullied his life ; the other in the gulph
Of black perdition must have waked ; no time
For mercy left ; for penitence, for pray'r,
For pardon none ; his crimes yet unatoned
From heav'n demanding vengeance. But the hand 905
Of Goodness spares him, that repentant tears
May ease the feeling heart, and Justice drop
Her claim ; or still relentless, that the stroke
May fall, when his full cup o'erflows with ill.

SAY,

SAY, dreams thy soul ^z that God's eternal plan 910
 By man's frail life is bounded?—When the wing
 Of some bold eagle, wheeling on the wind,
 Triumphant bears him from the straining eye;

^z *Say, dreams thy soul, &c.*] As the reward of Virtue in a future state, will amply compensate for the afflictions comparatively insignificant, to which it is subjected in the present; the Poem ends with a vindication of Providence, supposed to come from those who are placed in a state of immutable felicity. To believe that these happy spirits will be employed in this manner, is surely no unreasonable suggestion. Why should we think that the soul, escaped from its prison, and impartially examining the conduct of Providence in its former state of existence, will not find subjects of praise and adoration, arising from the review of those incidents which were once considered as real evils? This is only contemplating the Supreme mind, as

From seeming evil still educing good;

And better thence again, and better still,

In infinite progression. — — — THOMSON.

And is in reality only carrying the matter a little further than we do in the affairs of common life, when one man, who is cool and deliberate, can foresee a benefit arising to his neighbour, from an event, which the other, in the tumult of thought, considers as an affliction from which no benefit can result.

Deem't

Deem'st thou the bird is lost? or that his flight
 Just stops, when Heav'n's transparent azure veils 915
 The last dim speck? Yet when its prison-bars
 Are loosed, and the freed soul all radiant springs
 Exulting o'er this rolling orb; its flight
 Unseen; its path to thy contracted gaze
 Lost in the viewless æther: think'st thou then 920
 Its powers dissolved, because the death-set eye
 Points not th' enlivening beam?—No—let the mind
 Extend its view:—Lo from thy sight once more
 I purge the mortal film! Behold the climes
 Where Virtue fears no chilling blast; but reigns 925
 Sublime, and radiant in eternal day!

He spoke; and to th' aerial region raised
 His hand. My eye pursued it, and illumed
 By heav'nly light, beheld stupendous scenes
 Ineffable! the City of the King 930
 Eternal! whose high towers wide-dazzling flamed
 From God's divine effulgence! To the stream
 Of rushing light, the Sun's broad orb would seem
 A winking taper!—O'er the domes sublime
 Sat young Felicity, veil'd by a stream 935
 Of mantling radiance; and an orient crown

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Star-spangled, heightning as it graced her form,
 Circled her beamy front.—The floor emboss'd
 With gold and diamond, ecchoed to the tread
 Of Seraphim, celestial shapes! their robes 940
 Divinely wrought, and tinctured with the dyes
 Of heav'n; their plumage glittering like the bow
 That gilds the blue horizon, when the sun
 Showers on the trembling arch his purple ray.

ABOVE, innumerable wings display'd 945
 Resplendent, fann'd the undulating air,
 And bore cherubic forms. Some to the stars
 (Beneath that sparkled like a twinkling flame)
 Shot down, and gradual roll'd their orbs around
 Some central sun; or plunging in his mass 950
 Of light, concocted and dispersed the beams
 Along the azure void.—Some hovering near
 What seem'd a river, on th' aerial wave
 Slow sail'd; their emerald pinions in the flood
 Now lost, now towering in the midway air. 955

Not long my wondering sight had scann'd the scene
 All-glorious; when a great majestic train
 In full procession to th' Eternal's throne

Moved slow and solemn. Nearer as they came;
 Of those they seem'd from Life's tumultuous wave 960
 Escaped, and landed on that blissful shore
 Where tempests never blow. Each by his side
 An harp sustain'd; and o'er the form divine
 A robe of spotless white descending, flow'd
 Redundant; on each head a golden crown 965
 Flamed like the morning star. The branching palm
 (Such palm as heav'n's celestial clime can yield)
 High-raised and waving, graced their happy hands;
 Emblem of Peace and Victory! With these;
 I saw in triumph moving, Him whom late 970
 The wave had whelm'd; blest, that its swelling tide
 Had check'd his purpose. Joy ineffable
 Illumed his eyes. Amid th' adoring tribe
 He pass'd exulting thro' the gate that led
 Full to the throne of God. Their gradual course 975
 Th' Archangel led, by circling Seraphim
 Inclosed; Heav'n's dazzling standard in the air
 Blazed wide before him, and his voice proclaim'd
 Hosanna to the Highest! Peace on earth!
 To man Benevolence and Love!—Before 980
 The Throne (where Darkness wrapt her cloudy veil
 O'er the full noon of uncreated day)

They bow'd in low prostration, and began
 Their song of triumph. Thus the melting strain
 Was heard, while all around the boundless skies 985
 Responsive ecchoed to the voice of praise.

“ To thy great Name, Eternal God! To Thee
 “ Be endless Honour! Just are ALL thy ways
 “ To mortal man; tho' fathomless and dark
 “ To finite reason, e'er th' unprison'd mind 990
 “ Hath shot the gulph of Death! O let thy sons,
 “ Once suffering, now triumphant, bless the hand,
 “ Though deem'd severe, that led them thro' the maze,
 “ The thorny maze of Life! that oft denied
 “ Apparent Good, to lead them to the fount 995
 “ Of all created Beauty! that decreed
 “ What Folly deem'd its Punishment; when vain,
 “ Self-flattering Virtue hoped Reward; to check
 “ Presumption! that from seeming Evil, wrought
 “ Full joy, unbounded as thy Presence! High! 1000
 “ Ineffable! immortal!”—As they spoke;
 Th' angelic throng, innumerable as the stars
 Of night, all-kindling, with melodious voice
 Sung to their lutes the airs of heav'n. The strains
 (Sweeter than music to the languid ear 1005

Of wakeful Melancholy, as it drinks
 Th' intoxicating stream) o'erpower'd at once
 My feebler organs. Sudden transport seized
 My throbbing heart. I wish'd a Cherub's wings,
 Afar to waft me to those happy shores,
 Where no vicissitude of night and day,
 No changing seasons, nor the baleful breath
 Of Sickness taints the balmy clime; but Hope
 Dies in Fruition, and Faith's distant ken
 Dissolves in Vision's full transported gaze.

1010

1015

Lo! now the ways^a of heav'n's eternal King
 To man are open! (thus the Sire resumed.)

Review

^a *Lo! now the ways, &c.]* Having now endeavoured to point out the most conspicuous marks of Design, which appear in the structure and government of the world; we shall sum up the whole with some proofs from the writings of the most eminent Ancients, which will serve to corroborate the preceding arguments, and to shew, that the belief of a Providence hath characterised every age of the world, and every society of men.—In the noblest of human productions, the

Διὸς ἡμετέρας βούλη,

Review them and adore! Hear the loud voice
Of Wisdom sounding in her works!—"Attend,

"Ye

or, "the will of the Deity accomplished;" is the master key which turns the whole work, and by which every part of it is directed. As every reader may consult Mr. Pope's admirable translation for instances of this kind, we forbear to extend this note with quotations from the original. We have already adduced the testimony of Aristotle to the same purpose. Plato, in innumerable instances, expresseth his belief of a Providence. Thus he tells us, that the only Cause of life to man and to all other creatures is *O Ἀρχὴ καὶ βασιλεὺς τῶν πάντων*, the Governor and Ruler of all things, Plat. in Cratyl. In his discourses on Laws, he labours this point with much assiduity. He represents the Deity as pervading universal nature, and animating the earth, the sea, the sun, &c. He considers his government of the world as extending to the minutest parts of it, and compares Him to a Physician, who explores the latent source of a distemper, in order thoroughly to eradicate it; and to Governors of Kingdoms who inspect the smallest transactions, that by these they may regulate matters of higher importance, Leg. 10. passim. Ælian and Xenophon pathetically complain that tenets, with regard to Providence, which never took place among barbarous nations, were embraced among a people more civilised, and from whose superior advantages, better effects might have been expected to follow, Æl. lib. ii. Xenoph. Symp. The Roman Orator and Philosopher is sufficiently explicit in giving his sentiments on this subject. *Reprimam jam* (says he speaking

of

“ Ye sons of men ! ye children of the dust,

1020

“ Be wise ! Lo ! I was present, when the Sire

“ Of

of the punishment of bad actions) & non insequar longius ; eoque minus quod plus pœnarum habeo quam petivi. Tantum ponam, duplicem pœnam esse divinam, quod constaret & ex vexandis vivorum animis, et ea fama mortuorum, ut eorum exitium & judicio vivorum & gaudio comprobetur, Cic. de Leg. lib. ii. How glowing and animated is the following passage !—Idemque cum cœlum, terras, maria, rerumque omnia naturam perspexerit ; eaque unde generata, quo recurrant, quando, quo modo obitura, quid in iis mortale & caducum, quid divinum æternumque sit viderit ; Ipsumque ea moderantem & regentem pæne prehenderit, seseque non unis circumdatum mœnibus, popularem alicujus definiti loci, sed civem totius mundi quasi unius urbis agnoverit : in hac magnificentia rerum atque in hoc conspectu & cognitione naturæ, Dii immortales ! quam ipse se noscet ! De Leg. lib. i. To these we may add the testimony of Porcatus, who tells us that the Supreme Mind goes under the name of Ζεύς, or Jupiter, because He pervades and animates every part of His works. He is likewise called (says this Author) the universal Governor, and the Soul of the World ; epithets which are expressive of His Providence, and of His Immensity, De Nat. Deor. ab init. We might mention many other examples of the same kind, from the writings of the Ancients : But those which have been already adduced will be sufficient to satisfy any reasonable person of their belief in this matter ; and that most of them would have said with an author, who was not too credulous,

" Of heav'n pronounced His Fiat ; when His eye
 " Glanced thro' the gulph of Darknefs, and His hand
 " Fashioned the rifing universe :—I faw,
 " O'er the fair lawns, the heaving mountains raife 1025
 " Their pine-clad fpires ; and down the fhaggy cliff
 " I gave the rill to murmur. The rough mounds
 " That bound the maddening deep ; the ftorm that roars
 " Along the defert ; the Volcano fraught
 " With burning brimftone ;—I prefcribe their ends. 1030
 " I rule the rufhing winds, and on their wings
 " Triumphant walk the tempeft.—To my call
 " Obfequious bellows the red bolt, that tears
 " The cloud's thin mantle, when the gufhing fhower
 " Descending copious bids the defart bloom. 1035

" I GAVE to man's dark fearch fuperior light ;
 " And clear'd dim Reason's mifty view, to mark
 " His powers, as thro' revolving ages tried,
 " They rofe not to his Maker : thus prepared

— — — — Deus ille fuit — —

Qui Princeps vitæ rationem invenit eam, quæ
 Nunc appellatur Sapientia ; quique per artem
 Fluctibus e tantis *vitam*, tantisque tenebris,
 In tam tranquillo, & tam clara luce locavit.

Lucret. lib. v. 3.

To

" To know how distant from his narrow ken 1040

" The truths by heav'n reveal'd ; My hand display'd

" The plan fair-opening, where each nobler view,

" That swells th' expanding heart ; each glorious hope,

" That points ambition to its goal ; each aim,

" That stirs, exalts, and animates Desire ; 1045

" Pours on the mind's rapt sight a noon-tide ray,

" Nor less in life employ'd, 'tis mine to raise

" The desolate of heart ; to bend the brow

" Of stubborn Pride, to bid reluctant ire

" Subside ; to tame rude Nature to the rein 1050

" Of Virtue. What though screen'd from mortal view,

" I walk the deepening gloom ? What tho' my ways,

" Remote from Thought's bewilder'd search, are wrapt

" In triple darkness ?—Yet I work the springs

" Of Life, and to the general Good direct 1055

" Th' obsequious means to move.—O ye, who tofs'd

" On Life's tumultuous ocean, eye the shore,

" Yet far removed ; and wish the happy hour

" When Slumber on her downy couch shall lull

" Your cares to sweet repose : Yet bear awhile, 1060

" And I will guide you to the balmy climes

" Of rest ; will lay you by the silver stream

Crown'd

"Crown'd with Elyfian bowers, where peace extends
 "Her blooming olive, and the Tempest pours
 "Its killing blast no more."—Thus Wisdom speaks 1065
 To Man; thus calls him thro' th' external form
 Of Nature, thro' Religion's fuller noon,
 Thro' Life's bewildering mazes; to observe
 A PROVIDENCE IN ALL.—Now each surmise
 Repres'd, I read conviction in thine eye; 1070
 Live then resign'd, that when the solemn knell
 Of Death shall call thee to the tomb; the mind,
 In thought rejoicing, as it marks the past,
 May eye the Future with exulting Hope.

Pass a few circling years, and Life's short tale 1075
 Is winded. Weeping lasts a night, but Joy
 Crowns the fair morning.—As he spoke, his shape
 Was changed; his cheek with youth's vermilion bloom
 Glow'd heav'nly bright; and o'er his vesture flow'd
 In graceful curls, the long-descending hair 1080
 Loose on the gale of Evening. In his eyes
 Moist'n'd with living dew, thy genial ray,
 Aurora, sparkled; and the little Loves
 Play'd on his ruby lips. A robe of light
 Mantled his limbs, and four resplendent wings 1085
 Whose

Whose plumage glow'd with purple, green, and gold,
Flamed all-refulgent as He moved. A while
He eyed me rapt :—then spread his glittering plumes,
And soar'd a Seraph to the skies. The eye
Of Fancy kindled, as she mark'd him high
In air. She look'd, and starting from the ground,
On rapid wings impetuous burst away.

1090

SOLITUDE;

The first of these is the fact that the
 second of these is the fact that the
 third of these is the fact that the
 fourth of these is the fact that the
 fifth of these is the fact that the
 sixth of these is the fact that the
 seventh of these is the fact that the
 eighth of these is the fact that the
 ninth of these is the fact that the
 tenth of these is the fact that the

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7. seventh is the fact that the
8. eighth is the fact that the
9. ninth is the fact that the
10. tenth is the fact that the

SOLITUDE;

OR, THE

ELYSIUM of the POETS:

A

V I S I O N.

ONAP EK ΔΙΟΣ ΕΣΤΙ. Hom.

SOLITUDE;

OR THE

RELYSIUM of the POET:

A

V. I. S. I. N.

ON THE ART OF THE POET.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
J O H N,
EARL OF HOPETOUN,
ETC. ETC. ETC.

THE FOLLOWING
P O E M,
IN TESTIMONY OF ESTEEM FOR THE
MOST VALUABLE QUALITIES,
AND OF GRATITUDE FOR THAT
PATRONAGE OF THE ARTS,
WHICH CONSTITUTES
THE NOBLEST EXERCISE
OF EVERY
INTELLECTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT,
I S
MOST RESPECTFULLY
INSCRIBED BY
JOHN OGILVIE.

TO THE
RIGHT HONORABLE
J O H N
B A R L O F H O T E T O U N
THE ETC ETC

THE FOLLOWING
P O E M
IN TESTIMONY OF PRAISE FOR THE
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JOHN OLIVER

T H E
I N T R O D U C T I O N.

IT is the design of the following Poem to give the English reader an idea, in as short a compass as possible, of the character, merit, and discriminating excellencies of the most eminent British Poets. As the Author was originally prompted to form this design by that love to his Country, of which every mind is in some measure susceptible, he will not, conscious as he is of this partiality, venture to decide upon the comparative merit of Great Britain, considered as the Rival of foreign Nations, in the production of Writers of distinguished genius. The truth is, a true Poet is a character so very uncommon, that in the happiest concurrence of favourable circumstances, no Nation whatever can boast of having often produced it. An eminent degree of any intellectual faculty appears not frequently, nor is it necessary that it should. The Author cannot however avoid taking notice, on this subject, of the wise distribution which takes place among mankind with

regard to the faculties of the human mind. Considered as Members of a Community supported by just and necessary regulations, the qualification requisite either to form an institution, to judge of its expediency, or to apply its rules to particular circumstances, is surely a comprehensive and penetrating Judgment. This faculty therefore we observe to be more universally, and even (considering men in general) more equally conferred than any other. The degree of Invention (for it ought to be observed, that there are many degrees of it which are not accompanied by a talent for composition) that is necessary to the discovery or improvement of such objects as render life agreeable by augmenting its conveniencies, is likewise bestowed promiscuously upon many individuals; and because it hath been so, is not perhaps regarded in proportion to its intrinsic merit. That species (or to speak more philosophically) that exertion of Imagination, which leads the Writer to form the most exquisite resemblances, and to combine the most delicate proportions, as it ultimately tends to please those who are previously supposed to have been instructed, and as it can only exist in its full perfection in some improved state of Society, is distributed less indiscriminately among mankind; and a Few appear to be considered as sufficient to effectuate every purpose which it pro-

poseth to accomplish. Without ascertaining particularly the precise meaning of the word Genius, it will be universally allowed, that the combination of these two faculties in their utmost vigour, constitutes the highest sphere of excellence which the human mind can possibly obtain. The records of Antiquity present us only with two instances of this great combination in an Homer and Virgil; to which our own country can oppose these of Shakespear, Milton, Ossian, and Spencer.

THE critical Reader, who, after this representation, may be ready to accuse the Author of presumption, for attempting to exhibit the characters of these last mentioned Writers, with a variety of diction, imagery and sentiment, corresponding in some degree to the manner of each, ought to remember, that it does not surely follow, that because an Author delineates a character with justice and propriety, he therefore claims a share of that merit which distinguished his Original. We would commend the qualities which an Historian might display in describing the actions and characters of a Turenne or a Colbert; but we would not certainly conclude, even though the performance should be happily executed, that the Writer expected to be regarded as an illustrious Hero, or a consummate Statesman.

IN order however to give the several Figures in the following piece, as nearly as possible, their just proportions and importance, the Author hath endeavoured to describe each of these in that manner which he conceived to be most suitable; and with that drapery, which he supposed to be at once the justest and the most ornamental. With this view it was, that instead of giving simply a detail of the writings of these great Geniuses, and of insisting particularly upon their separate excellencies, he hath contrived a kind of poetical Elysium as the place of their residence; and hath attempted to impress some idea of their characters upon the mind of the Reader, by adjusting the external scenery to the manners of the person who is supposed to be placed in it. After this apparatus, the Bard is introduced in an attitude adapted to this strain of composition; and he amuses himself in his Elysium, by reciting to the music of the pipe or the lyre, the different subjects of which he had formerly treated. The Author proposed indeed at first, to have made each of the Poets speak in his own person, and resume some part of his works, in a stile somewhat similar to that which we might conceive him to employ. Though this method is really taken in the case of Pope, Thomson, and Denham; yet he found upon reflection, that a constant adherence to it would not only have

spoiled

spoiled the Reader's entertainment, by rendering the narrative part of the Poem altogether disproportioned to the descriptive; but after all, the happiest execution (unless he had run the narration to a very great length) could have conveyed no adequate idea of the different species of poetical composition, in which some of them excelled. Upon the whole therefore, he determined to make use of both methods; sometimes narrating himself the themes of the Poet, and sometimes making him insist at length upon those, which are either in themselves most important, or in which he excelled most particularly, as answering most fully the design of this work.

THOUGH the Author proposed, by taking the course already mentioned, to avoid an extreme on either side; yet he is sufficiently aware, that some Readers will censure him for having rendered, at least, the first part of the Poem almost wholly descriptive. They will be apt to suggest, that even the richest imagery dazzles and fatigues the mind, when the series of moral observation does not, upon some occasions, contribute to relieve it. Without disputing the truth of this general remark, the Writer would only vindicate his own conduct in the present instance from its being unavoidable. The scene with which the

Poem opens, the cell of Solitude, the climes through which she passed, and the Elysium into which she opened an admission;—these objects naturally require the graces of description, perhaps in a much higher degree than they are bestowed in this poem. As to the Poets themselves, the Author hath endeavoured to speak of them with propriety, and to make those, who recite the subjects of their own Writings, run into such a vein of sentiment, as he conceived to be least unappropriated to their separate professions. The moral observations which arise from particular parts, he choosed rather to throw together in a connected series at the end, than to scatter loosely through the work.

In discussing the several parts of a plan in itself so complicated, and requiring a stile of composition so constantly diversified; in such a performance, the Reader who shall expect to see equal justice done to every character, and his own idea of it perfectly exhibited, will form an expectation which no effort whatever will compleatly gratify. Admitting that the Author of the following attempt, may have spoke too slightly of a favourite Poet, and too warmly of one to whom his Reader will allow a less share of merits; yet surely the Person who makes this remark, will be opposite enough to indulge another (when he is not grossly faulty)

faulty) in prejudices similar perhaps, to those which he enjoys himself without censure. He will permit him to bestow the most lively colouring, not merely where acknowledged superiority rendered it expedient, but where he found it easiest to catch a particular manner, from some real or supposed resemblance which it might have to his own.

ANOTHER set of Readers may probably, at first view, be offended with the order in which the Poets are arranged; Milton being seemingly preferred to Shakespear, as Thomson is to Pope. Without enquiring into the comparative merit of these Writers, which would be altogether improper here, the Author would only observe, that he placed them in their present order, to avoid that uniformity of description which must have resulted from any other disposition. The similarity of character betwixt Shakespear and Spencer (both of whom were more indebted to Nature than to Education) would have unavoidably occasioned a corresponding similarity of imagery and sentiment, had the one of these immediately followed the other; an inconveniency which is wholly superseded, by placing Milton betwixt them. — The peculiar circumstances of Ossian discriminate him sufficiently from all

other Poets. Pope stands indeed betwixt Thomson and Dryden, as the Essay on Man affords a noble train of sentiments, to sum up the illustrious detail of the most eminent British Poets; and the two last mentioned differ so much, at least in point of correctness, that it was easy to diversify the scenery in which they are placed,

Thus the Public hath a full view of the principles upon which the following little work hath been planned and conducted. Let it be observed, that he pretends not to have described the whole of this poetical Region, in which the names of some Writers of this present age might appear with dignity. Should any of these think proper to supply the defects of the present attempt by a more compleat or masterly performance on so copious a subject, the Author (incapable as he is either of envy or malignity) will rejoice to see honour done to his Country, thro' whatever channel it is conveyed.

S O L I T U D E.

COME from the climes of light, celestial Maid!
Thou whose gay visions bless my nightly dream:
Lo! what bright scenes fair opening claim thine aid,
How Fancy glows o'er each transporting theme!

Not now to sing of God's eternal ways^b,
I sweep the swelling lyre's melodious strings:
More sweetly varying flow th' inspiring lays;
Grant melting notes, and strong yet temperate wings.

To tell what bards have blessed Britannia's clime,
Each beaming mild like Eve's refulgent star,
The Muse attempts, to paint her face sublime,
In song unequall'd, as unmatch'd in war.

^b The subject of Providence, a Poem. See Book I, ab init.

What time the Queen of Silence and of Night,
Steals meekly pensive from Endymion's bower,
Illumes the broider'd lawn with silver light,
Or hears the lone owl on some blasted tower,

Musing I roved, and mark'd the solemn scene.

No cloud obscured th' unbounded arch above;
Hush'd was each murmur o'er the still serene,
And calm the warblers of the vocal grove:

All but the wakeful Philomel.—Alone

She sat; and wailing from th' aerial bough
Mellifluous, pour'd her deeply plaintive moan,
The moan that thrills the dying ear of Woe.

Far in a dark wood's solitary maze,

Where the pine trembled o'er the murmuring rill,
Led soft, my rapt eye mark'd the streamy rays,
That glimmering tinged the wild o'er-arching hill.

At last, where Nature form'd a mossy seat

I stay'd, and eager drunk th' enchanting sound:
Calm Silence, hovering o'er the deep retreat,
Lull'd to the plaint the solemn waste around.

Then

Then trilling ceased the dying note!—Awhile
The strain still languish'd on the listening ear;
Till Fancy kindling, with benignant smile
Waked her wild harp, and call'd the woods to hear.

“ O Ye, whom Nature's genial charms inspire,
(Thus spake the Goddess of the thought sublime)
“ Who nobly ardent feel diviner fire,
“ Whose hope o'ershoots the lingering flight of Time!

“ Ye noble Few! whom not the splendid pride
“ Of wealth allures, nor Grandeur's tinsell'd plume;
“ Whose hearts to bleeding sympathy allied,
“ Can melt o'er Virtue's unlamented tomb:

“ YE, who thro' Modesty's involving veil
“ Can mark the features of a godlike mind,
“ Snatch Genius pining from the corrag'd dale,
“ Or feeling wake to transports all refined:

“ O come! escaped from Folly's bustling train;
“ Not these have eyed bright Fancy's genial ray,
“ Nor felt sweet transport in each throbbing vein,
“ Nor died deep-pierced to Love's dissolving lay.

“ Th

"Th' ingenuous blush that speaks the soul sincere;

"The living ardour of the mind's keen eye;

"On Pity's cheek the slow descending tear,

"And stealing from the heart the tender sigh,

" 'Tis mine to give. Though from the starry throne, O "

"Whence Power high-raised the rolling world surveys,

"Stoops not her ear to Woe's unheeded moan,

"Nor Genius basks in her enlivening rays;

"Yet, where wild Solitude's resounding dome "

"Lies deep and silent in the woodland shade,

"Sweet Peace with devious step delights to roam,

"And soft-reclining rests her gentle head,

"And Thou, whose feet to this deserted bower "

"Have stray'd; if mild Benevolence is thine,

(To me thus smiling spoke the heavenly power)

"If warm thou bow'st at Virtue's sacred shrine;

"If thy thrill'd heart with sympathetic woe "

"Hath bled (for man is destined to endure;)

"If others anguish bade thine eyes o'erflow,

"If prone to feel the grief thou can'st not cure;

"With

"With me retire. Lo! to the clime remote

"I lead, where yet to human step unknown,

"The power who, lifts to God th' aspiring thought,

"Rapt Solitude hath rear'd her solemn throne.

"What scenes shall then thy wondering sight behold!

"Yet know that toils, that perils go before:

"The firm of mind, the resolute, the bold,

"Brave the rude storm, and reach th' appointed shore."

She spoke. Her airy wings expanded wide,

The wan ray trembling on the silver plume,

Shot where a hollow rock's high-arching fide

Stood lone and silent as the desert tomb.

There fullen Darkness fix'd her dire abode:

Black clouds involving wrapt her gloomy cell:

While as her flow hand waved a Stygian rod,

Wail'd thro' th' impervious gulph the fiends of hell.

There pined pale Envy in the cavern dun,

There Time deep-furrowing plough'd the front of Care;

Despair with curses eyed the winking moon,

And Frenzy howling tore her tangled hair.

These,

These, as the radiant Goddess flash'd along,
 Shrunk from the ray that lighten'd o'er her frame:
 Such rapid fate dissolves the insect throng,
 When the black whirlwind rides the wings of Flame.

At last emerging from th' abyss of night,
 Again pale Cynthia pour'd her silver beam,
 Where bloom'd a lawn fair as the early light,
 That first weak-glimmering tinged the glassy stream.

O'er its loose robe, all balmy as the dew
 That bathes Aurora's dropping locks, were seen
 The tribes profuse of each resplendent hue,
 That glowing paints the rich enamell'd green.

There hung the violet its dejected head,
 The lilly languish'd to the sighing gale;
 While daisies sprinkled o'er their velvet bed,
 And painted cowslips smiled along the dale.

Sweet haunt of Quiet! When thy search in vain
 Hath roam'd the city vast, or distant hill,
 Lull'd by lone Philomel's desponding strain,
 Thought finds her sleeping near the purling rill.

Dim

Dim as the fleeting visions of the night,
A dark tower tottering closed th' extended view;
While round its spires, illumed with feeble light,
The flitting bat and boding raven flew.

Rent was the hanging arch, the domes o'erthrown;
Nor tread was heard along the desert pile,
Save when the troubled ghost with hollow moan
Strode slowly o'er the long-resounding ile.

One only cell withstood the waste of Time;
'Twas where a turret rear'd its moss-clad brow:
Gloomy it stood, in fading pomp sublime,
And shew'd the mouldering wrecks that frown'd below.

Here, on her hand her drooping head reclined,
Wrapt in deep musing sat the lonely power;
Pensive she sat, and heard the howling wind
Die faintly murmuring round her ivy'd bower.

In graceful ringlets fell her amber hair;
Black as the raven's plumes her mantle flow'd;
No Cupids round her fann'd the sultry air,
Nor festive Echo cheer'd her lone abode.

But

But the wild harp that to the blast complains
 Soothed with melodious plaint her raptured ear;
 Deep, solemn, awful roll'd the varying strains,
 Such strains as Seraphim with transport hear.

For these descending oft, a radiant throng,
 The rapt Power bending from her ebony throne,
 Sublime in glorious vision sail along,
 And talk of themes to mortal man unknown.

Her serious eye, as Fancy's form was seen,
 A placid smile illumed. Serene she said,
 "Why from the bowers of bliss, enchanting Queen,
 "Strays thy loved step to this sequester'd shade?"

"And whence thy follower?—To my haunt repairs
 "Few, yet elate in Life's delightful prime,
 "But those who pale with grief, or whelm'd with care,
 "Have felt the cankering tooth of wasteful Time."

"Thine, (thus the Queen of every grace replied)
 "Thine is the tribe that wakes the warbling lyre:
 "Thy charms the Muse's sweetest song supplied,
 "Thy thought exalts her, and thy groves inspire.

^c The Harp of Æolus.

"By

- “ By me convey’d, this inexperienced Guest
 “ Attends :—To guide his future hours, display
 “ The scenes where now with ease, with freedom blest,
 “ Thy happy offspring share the climes of day.

 “ Shew where reclined beneath embowering shades
 “ Thy sons, Britannia ! strike the trembling string ;
 “ Safe where no storm the peaceful haunt invades,
 “ The boundless forests echoing as they sing.

 “ I to the cliff that overhangs the main
 “ Retire : my hands a sylvan maze have wove,
 “ Where Shakespear, pouring his unlabour’d strain,
 “ Sees Nature listening with a parent’s love.”

She said, and vanish’d. But her voice divine
 Smiling serene the thoughtful Power obey’d ;
 Silent she left her solitary shrine,
 And o’er the waste, a pathless journey, led.

Deep was the gloom, as thro’ surrounding woods,
 Thro’ walks impervious to the noon-day blaze,
 O’er rocks that tottering felt the torrent floods,
 O’er lawns illumed by Cynthia’s silver rays,

O'er wilds we trod, where Winter's freezing hand
Chills the bleak mountains with eternal snow,
O'er climes where Famine wastes the barren land,
O'er caves that shake while earthquakes rowl below.

To Night's remotest verge at last we came;
When lo! rejoicing as her veil withdrew,
Another region, yet unknown to fame,
A new horizon dazeling rush'd to view.

From the tall summit of an arching hill,
Wondering I saw the glorious scenes unfold;
Thro' groves of citron crept the amber rill,
Where flamed the yellow boughs with downy gold.

A garden here, in vernal beauty bright,
Shook musky fragrance on the scented gale:
There waved the brown wood on the darkening fight,
Or Zephyr fluttering skimm'd the lillied vale.

Now lost in wildness was the wandering eye,
Now pierced the shady bower's incumbent gloom;
Soothed as the joyous spring stood blushing nigh,
Or rapt as Summer breathed her deepening bloom.

Each shade a Bard, with wreathing laurel crown'd,
 Possess'd ; and near the seat of Pleasure rose ;
 Luxuriant beauty shower'd her growth around,
 What copious growth Elystan lawns disclose.

Just where the hill ^d (these happy mansions shewn)
 O'erlook'd the pendent trees that waved between ;
 On the fair borders of that temperate zone,
 Tho' rude, yet graceful, smiled a rustic scene.

^d *Just where the hill, &c.]* Here the principal subject of the Poem begins with a description of Chaucer. It is necessary to observe, that the author does not attempt in speaking of the more ancient British poets to imitate the obsolete style in which they wrote. He is of opinion that the natural arrangement of the scenery in which they are placed, and a corresponding simplicity of expression, will convey to the reader a more just idea of their characters and manners, than he could receive from the most accurate imitation of their diction. It was the misfortune of these great geniuses to live at a time, when the language of their country was harsh and uncultivated. If we look on it as faulty and defective, it is surely the business of any writer who would imitate their manner, rather to clothe sentiments as similar as possible to theirs, in such language as they might be supposed to write in the present age, than to introduce an exploded and barbarous phraseology into a language, which it has taken so much time and labour to render harmonious and elegant. In compliance however with the general taste, a few idioms of this kind are admitted here.

Rich, yet confused, the intermingling sprays,
Uncouthly gay, their simple flowers display'd ;
Nor here had fashion plann'd the wildering maze,
Nor Art's soft touch th' entangling shrubs obey'd.

But o'er the whole majestic Nature strode,
Her form disdainful of the mimic hand ;
The brightening Wilderness before her glow'd,
Behind gay plenty clothed the broider'd land.

A little hamlet in the midst appear'd,
Where antique figures stood exposed to view ;
Of rough materials was the structure rear'd,
And round its walls the clasping ivy grew.
Not far a laurel's spreading boughs were seen,
Beneath whose umbrage sat a careless Swain :
The Dryads tripping o'er the daisied green,
And bleating flocks confess'd his powerful strain.

Much sung the swain of love, and much of care,
Much of th' imperious Wife, the man forsworn ;
Much of the Dotard tame, th' insidious Fair,
The plan projected, and the gilded horn ;

How

How oft the Nymph her ancient mate beguiles;
 Soothes when he storms, or chuckles as he leers;
 When roused eludes him with superior wiles,
 Or jealous,—bursts in thunder on his ears.

Thus pass'd his laughing hours in ease away,
 Where still new hopes the restless mind employ;
 Nor clouds dark-lowering quench the beams of day,
 Nor sorrow skulks beneath the smile of joy.

“ Lo ! there the Father of the British lyre,
 “ Old Chaucer lives, (thus spoke the Power divine)
 “ Awful, tho’ rude. The venerable Sire
 “ Transported marks his long-descending line.”

She ceased :—For near I mark’d a Fairy train,
 Like clouds gay-gleaming mid th’ aerial blue;
 In floating radiance o’er th’ illumined plain,
 A glittering tribe, the light Assembly flew.

The mingling hues that tinge the showery bow,
 The dew that trembles to the spangling ray;
 The tints that o’er the spreading tulip glow,
 The topaz flaming to the orient ray;

Such blended dyes their silky wings unfold :

Young Zephyr wanton'd o'er the gilded plume ;

Bright was the scene with azure, green, and gold,

And round the varied landscape breathed perfume.

Where Art with Nature's rich luxuriance strove,

Half-pruned, half-rambling rose the leafy sprays ;

A Shepherd Swain, amid the gloomy grove,

Play'd wildly-sweet his simple roundelays.

Of hardy Knight he told, of Fairy Queen,

Of Lover wan by weeping brook reclined,

Of Wizard old that spread his nets unseen,

Of Damsel fair to wicked wight resign'd ;

Of Una meek, by causeless woes oppress'd,

As o'er the howling waste she roam'd forlorn ;

Yet Guilt no tenant of her gentle breast,

But her's the tear of tender Pity born,

Ah woe the while !—To Lofel loose betray'd,

Not the torn tresses of her raven hair,

No pray'r avail'd the dear unhappy Maid,

Nor the deep groans of Anguish and Despair.

Mean-

Meanwhile around him hung the shining throng,
So sweetly- various flow'd th' enchanting strain ;
The Fay that bore his laurel wreath along
Was rapt, and stretch'd her eager arm in vain.

Not till the Swain's melodious plaint was o'er,
Ceas'd the soft, silent, sympathetic tear ;
The Syrens warbling from the vocal shore,
Thrill'd with such melting notes th' enraptured ear.

But now a Garden, like that Eden fair,
Where first weak Eve the wily Foe beguiled,
Unbounded, floating to the balmy air,
In all the pride of glowing Beauty smiled.

On loaded trees the clustering fruitage hung,
Ambrosia dropping from the mellow bough ;
The plummy race harmonious anthems sung,
Or sip'd the nectar'd rill that stream'd below.

What Summer views in all her gay domain,
What Fable's airy pencil ere bestow'd,
Whate'er Elysium's happy fields contain,
In rich profusion crown'd this blest abode.

Nor yet wild-scattering spread th' exhaustless store;
 But Taste to range the copious growth combined;
 Wild Fancy stoop'd to Reason's gentle lore,
 And Nature's boon informing Art refined.

One tree o'er all sublime in grandeur stood:
 So towers on Lebanon's exalted brow
 A Cedar old, and fees the rising wood
 Around its venerable Parent grow.

Beneath its shade, where sigh'd the dying Gale,
 Reposed an Inmate of th' ethereal skies;
 With wavy radiance flamed his feather'd mail,
 And flash'd keen lightning from his dazzling eyes.

His hand an apple held, delicious sight!
 Not like the fruit that youthful Paris gave;
 Smooth was the glossy rind, with vermeil bright,
 Like Venus blushing from the silver wave;

Of power to cleanse the tainted heart from sin,
 O'er the pure frame to bid corruption cease,
 Tune the calm thoughts to harmony within,
 And soothe the boiling passions into peace.

A Bard

A Bard was near; and glittering by his side
 The child of magic song, the melting Lyre,
 Whose frame with Music's sweetest breath supplied,
 Wake's o'er the kindling soul celestial fire.

Awhile in converse high the Angel Guest
 Held him;—then sweeping o'er the sounding strings,
 Such strains he pour'd, as mid the climes of rest
 Thrill the high Audience when Urania sings.

As when an Hermit, whose sequester'd cave
 Deep in the shade of pathless wilds is thrown,
 Sees the dim Spectre from the gloomy grave
 Arroused, and hears the more than mortal tone;

Or ardent marks some bright ethereal band,
 That tell the wonders of the worlds above;
 How Earth obedient to the great Command
 Arose; How Angels hymn the Source of love!

Awe, Hope, and Transport seize him as he hears,
 Such Passions rose when first the Bard began,
 Sung how th' Eternal form'd the rolling spheres,
 Or stamp'd the breathing dust, and call'd it Man.

To

To Heav'n high-soaring burst th' exalted song.
 Of imp'ous deeds I heard, and dire alarms;
 Two mighty hosts I saw, tremendous throng!
 Tower in refulgent mail, and azure arms,

Radiant they trod in panoply divine:
 Their Chiefs, dark-frowning in the van, afar
 Like promontories moved:—the dreadful sign
 Was given, and rush'd th' angelic tribes to war,

'Twas Thou, Omnipotent! whose parent care
 Then held each link of Nature's beauteous chain;
 Elfe had yon worlds amid the fields of air
 Been whirl'd, and Night resumed her dark domain.

How swell'd the soul, as with its shaggy store
 Torn was the fix'd hill from the rocks below;
 As each strong arm th' inverted mountain bore,
 And hurl'd th' o'erwhelming ruin on the Foe!

Not long I gaz'd, when down the rending skies
 The rushing chariot of Jehovah came:
 I saw the wheels, instinct with living eyes,
 Wrapt in the Lightning's broad and sheeted flame.

Black

Black thunder roar'd around th' avenging God;

While on the Whirlwind's wing before Him driven,
The rebel crew beheld their dark abode;

Then roll'd wild-howling o'er the verge of Heaven.

Thus sung the Bard; and still to fight display'd,

Rose with his strain each vivid scene to view;
To thought so just was Fancy's powerful aid,
Her light so piercing, and her shades so true.

But sweeter lays * now charm'd the wishing mind.

I turn'd;— and eager, as they pour'd along—
What Powers, I cried, what heavenly Powers combined,
Wind yon deep stream of soul-dissolving song?

Nought spoke the Goddess; but her arm upheld

Shew'd where a beetling cliff o'erlook'd the plain:
Bloom'd from its top each flower-enamell'd field,
And rowl'd behind the far-resounding main.

* *But sweeter lays, &c.*] Though there are in *Paradise Lost* many instances of smooth and melodious versification, yet when compared with that of Shakespear, whose every sound at most is modulated harmony, perhaps the reader will not judge the epithet here applied to him altogether improper.

Th' aerial forest clothed its ragged side ;
Here spread the myrtle bower's harmonious maze ;
The torrent's voice in lulling murmurs died,
And Beauty's boundless waste o'erpower'd the gaze.

Of toil no trace th' untrodden wild retain'd ;
But Fancy's hand the sheltering arch had wove,
Fairer than Poet eyed, or Lover feign'd
Of clime Hesperian, or Idalian grove.

For there, obsequious to her varying call,
The Fairy region at the magic sound,
Girt with the hanging wood, or mouldering wall,
Now bloom'd a Villa, or a Desert frown'd.

And airy tenants o'er the dimpling stream
Hung loose ; or high in aim, in effort bold,
Suck'd hues ethereal from the dazzling beam,
To tinge the violet's velvet coat with gold ;

Or spoil'd the citron of its rich perfume,
Or caught the light drop in the liquid air ;
Or from the wren's breast pick'd the little plume,
To braid the tresses of the Naiads hair.

O'er all bright Ariel shone. His devious wing
Now swept soft fragrance in the spicy gale;
Or fluttering from the dewy lip of Spring
Brush'd nectar'd balm, and shower'd it o'er the dale.

O'er the dim top a gloomy arbour bow'd,
The boughs dark-shadowing veil'd the vaulted blue;
But opening fair beneath, the viftoed wood
Gave the gay climes that radiant burst to view.
Here Shakespear sat in regal glory bright,
And mark'd spontaneous flowers around him blow,
With scenes still shifting soothed his raptured sight,
Or drunk the music of the lawns below.

Graceful he moved, and scann'd the waste of air,
As his strong arm th' avenging bolt could wield,
Or catch the Tempest by the ragged hair,
Or bid an Earthquake whelm the blasted field.

Young Fancy near her highest influence shed,
Her keen eye kindling flash'd the blaze of noon:
The peacock thus in glittering plumes array'd,
Sails, while each orient hue reflects a Sun.

Not

Not distant far another Bard was seen,
 (The place was varied, but their height the same ')
 Where heaved the wide deep's placid wave serene,
 Oft flow, with melancholy step he came.

[Their height the same.] The author is sufficiently aware, that by placing Ossian in so exalted a station, he will give offence to some very critical, and even to some good-natured readers; which last class he would wish to please by any concession in his power. The former will accuse him of presumption, and want of all poetical taste, for placing any British poet on a level with Shakespear, who has so long, and so justly maintained an undisputed pre-eminence;—the latter, of partiality to a Poet, who (in conformity to the absurd distinction which has prevailed among Britons for some time) must in a peculiar sense be deemed his countryman.—To the first of these he would observe, that his intention in placing near to each other the two greatest natural geniuses, of which any age or country can boast, is not so much to represent them as equally excellent, as by exhibiting them in one view to give the reader as just an idea as possible of their separate characters. This remark will in a great measure obviate the objection of partiality, by which, in the present case, he should be sorry that any reader supposed him to be actuated. He gives his own opinion of the merit of Ossian, and is incapable of this illiberal prepossession.

The

The Power of musing to his thoughtful mind
Had lent her eagle pinions: O'er the main
He hung:— the Spirit of the hollow wind
Waked on his harp the long-lamenting strain.

Loose fell his hoary locks; the fanning air
Sigh'd thro' the venerable hairs;— his head
A crown adorn'd;— his swelling chest was bare;
His limbs the Warrior's rougher vesture clad;

No film o'ershadowing dimm'd his piercing sight,
Nor felt his vigorous form the waste of Time;
But tall and ardent as the sons of light,
O'er the rude beech he look'd, he trod sublime.

The Muse was near, who points beyond the sky;
Whose notes divine each meaner care controul,
Sail on the wings of Harmony, and high
To scenes all-glorious lift th' expanded soul.

O Goddess of the solemn mantle, hail!
Queen of the heart, who movest its thrilling strings,
Waft' st rapt attention on thy wondrous tale
Beyond the little range of mortal things!

As

As Ossian once, ah! let thy genial ray
 Me too illumine; while to thought display'd
 Flit the dim shapes that shun the eye of day,
 And forms that swim thro' pale Oblivion's shade.

A Maid, yet fair in Beauty's vernal bloom,
 Sat on the beech with listening ardour near;
 Her eye, like dew-drops spangling thro' the gloom,
 Dropt, as he sung; th' involuntary tear.

Yet then no grief had touch'd the throbbing breast;
 Pure from its influence was that scene refined:
 But Joy's strong beam the kindling soul confess'd,
 Such as alone inspires th' exalted mind.

Each Bard melodious pour'd th' alternate strain:
 Rush'd the full tide [§] of Shakespear's magic song,
 From desert isles that hear the roaring main,
 To climes where lightly dance th' aerial throng.

[§] *Rush'd the full tide, &c.*] The reader will easily observe, that the Tragedies here particularly pointed at, are, the *Tempest*, the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, and the historical Plays.

Now

Now howl'd with shrieks of woe th' unbounded waste;
 Or waved the brown wood's long-bewildering maze;
 Or lower'd the blackening noon by spells o'ercast;
 Or bloom'd the lawn, where sportful Fancy strays;

Or Ghosts indignant burst the marble tomb;
 Or pined in silent woe the drooping Maid;
 Or wail'd the Lover mid the blackening gloom
 With trembling lips, and call'd on death for aid.

To thrill the Murderer's shuddering nerves, unveil'd
 Thro' Night's stain'd shade the ghastly Phantom stood;
 Mutter'd his livid lips, to fight reveal'd,
 And on his rent throat hung the clotted blood.

Back starts the Tyrant at the threatening nod:
 His loose teeth chatter, and his broad eyes glare;
 The Furies o'er him shake their scorpion rod,
 And Horror's grey hand lifts his icy hair.

I saw where England's awful Sovereigns rose.

Gloomy they strode along th' darken'd field;
 This roll'd the battle o'er his prostrate foes,
 That shook the burnish'd helm and gleaming shield.

Yet vain their boast, ^h when at th' appointed hour
 Fate wing'd the dart that lays the mighty low;
 Vain was the downy couch, the roseate bower,
 To seal in rest the weeping lids of Woe.

Nor themes sublime alone employ'd his thought,
 But oft gay scenes th' unbended mind beguiled;
 Exulting Nature claim'd the finish'd draught,
 And Care's grim front, and canker'd Envy smiled.

But deeper plain'd ⁱ the Caledonian lyres
 Slow, wild and solemn, wail'd the melting lays
 Of dying groans it sang, of combats dire,
 And told the mournful tales of ancient days;

^h *Yet vain their boast, &c.*] See the celebrated Soliloquy in the second part of Henry IVth, act. 3. scene 2.

ⁱ *But deeper plain'd, &c.*] Ossian is perhaps the only writer who is uniformly and deeply mournful in almost every fragment he has left us. Perhaps this was partly owing to the state of society at the time when he flourished; partly to the gloomy train of ideas, which the remembrance of departed friends excites in the mind of a person who has long outlived them; and principally, no doubt, to that sublime melancholy, which is always the portion of exalted genius.

Of Ghosts dim-gliding on the Moon's wan beam,
 Of feeble sounds that tell the Hero's doom,
 Of Chiefs once famed, that o'er his midnight dream
 Lower dark, and point him to the lonely tomb.

He sung the narrow house with grass o'ergrown,
 Where oft as Night involves the dusky sphere,
 The Spirit hovering o'er the moss-clad stone
 Shrieks to the Hunter's pierced and startled ear.

I saw Balclutha's towers! ^k — No festive strain
 Of Mirth loud-echoing shook the vaulted hall;
 But there, vain hope! to feed his clamorous train
 The fearless fox o'erlook'd the hanging wall.

^k *I saw Balclutha's towers, &c.]* The author will venture to affirm, that no reader, who is endowed with poetic feeling, can read the passage here referred to in the poems of Ossian, without being sensibly affected. An inferior painter would have fixed upon many external circumstances, in order to convey a full idea of the desolation which obtained in a place, once the abode of mirth and festivity. But how forcibly is every circumstance recalled to the memory, and imprinted on the imagination, by the single picture which Ossian has given us of "a fox looking out of a window!"—Such is the power of a great genius. The reader, who would have a compleat view of the character and merit of this eminent Poet, may consult the ingenious and elegant Dissertation which is subjoined to his works.

Around was Ruin, Silence and Despair,
 Bleak wastes, and hills with rifted pines o'erspread,
 Th' enormous rock, whose ragged front was bare,
 And trees that nodded o'er the mighty dead.

So bursts the blaze of human pride away;
 Fame, Power, and Beauty, sport one fleeting hour;
 Each warm and bustling spends the busy day,
 At night lies down, and slumbering wakes no more.

Such were his themes;—while on his cloud enshrined
 Bold Fingal sat, in majesty serene;
 High o'er his airy sword in state reclined,
 Each thrilling note he felt, and varying scene.

Oft seem'd the tear to dim his radiant eye,
 His arm upraised oft shook a meteor shield;
 From his rent heart now burst the pitying sigh,
 Now flamed his look indignant o'er the field.

Led by the Goddess of the still retreat,
 From the rude cliff I scann'd the region o'er;
 Then mark'd, where temperate gales repress'd the heat,
 One waving Villa stretch'd along the shore.

Crown'd

Crown'd with fair banks and intermingling flowers,
 On painted beds, a variegated show;
 The Graces lay; while round their citron bowers
 Each blooming Season bade her offspring blow.

Three lovely Nymphs in sportive train combined,
 I saw. The first in flowing robes was dress'd;
 Her raven tresses floated on the wind,
 And primrose wreaths adorn'd her swelling breast!

Warm was her cheek with Youth's enchanting bloom,
 And shaped by Elegance her slender frame;
 Her eyes young Beauty's sweetest smiles illumine,
 And from her lips celestial accents came.

The crocus clothed in gold, the scented thyme,
 The daisy chequering o'er th' impearled ground,
 Waked by the influence of that blissful clime,
 Breathed as she moved their softening balm around.

In life's full prime was seen another Fair;
 Light on a flowery couch her limbs were laid;
 Her bosom loosen'd to the fanning air
 Heaved soft, protected by the cooling shade.

The lawn that floating screen'd its charms from view,
 Slow from each orb the fighting Gales remove;
 And o'er a space, pure as th' ethereal blue,
 Contending Cupids waft the breath of love.

Gay Nature near her richest garment wore,
 Robed, as when first in fair embroidery clad
 She moved, supplied from Heaven's exhaustless store,
 And radiant shook her nectar-dropping head.

Then sung the morning stars; th' angelic Quire
 Around exulting pour'd extatic lays;
 Burst the full hymn melodious from the lyre,
 And hosts rejoicing join'd the voice of praise.

Last came a Nymph of more commanding mien:
 Her dimpled cheek with deep vermilion glow'd;
 High was her front, exalted, yet serene,
 And waved the ripen'd fields where'er she trod.

Young Cupids o'er her play'd on purple wing;
 The Breeze obsequious wanton'd in her train,
 As with each Confort knit in airy ring:
 She danced, and shower'd her treasures o'er the plain.

No Winter here deform'd the smiling year,
Nor blackening cloud obscured the genial rays;
But lays celestial warbled on the ear,
And the bright region felt eternal day.

A Castle's towering height overlook'd the whole,
And near, a Poet pour'd his mazy song;
The flame of Genius touch'd his kindling soul;
He sung the Seasons, as they swimm'd along.

Supine in easy indolence reclined,
His limbs lay listless by a purling stream;
The Muse unprompted warm'd his gentle mind,
Or wrapt his senses in transforming dream.

" Mark (thus he spoke, nor from his couch arose)
" O Man! how Nature paints the blushing flower;
" How tinged by her the rich carnation blows,
" For thee how kind she weaves the woodbine bower.

" Think'ft thou the rolling year's harmonious round,
" Yon worlds revolving on the boundless air,
" Thy hills with woods, thy lawns with herbage crown'd,
" That these proclaim no Power's superior care?

" Hark from the woodland yon mellifluous strains!
 " The busy people of the vocal grove,
 " Soon as the grey dawn gilds th' ethereal plains,
 " Hail the great source of Beauty, Light and Love,

" Of thee reproachful swells th' enlivening note:
 " Shall He whose look sublime beholds the skies,
 " Shall He be mute?—Forbid it, Virtue, Thought!
 " 'Tis Nature's general voice,—Arise! arise!

" Does stern Adversity's corroding hand
 " Thy warmth repress?—Its rage Eugenio knew!
 " His, rich in pasture, was the smiling land;
 " The harvest his, wide-waving on the view.

" But Wealth avail'd not in the darkening hour;
 " On airy wings away the Vagrant fled:
 " The Breeze thus rifling spoils the wither'd flower,
 " And spreads its honours o'er their simple bed,

" His blameless Wife, the young Dione nigh,
 " Pined; the slow prey of life-consuming care;
 " Dim was the beam that sparkled in her eye,
 " And pale the cheek that bloom'd divinely fair.

" Two little Infants prattling by her side,
 " From her soft bosom call'd the bursting groan;
 " Now pleas'd with food, and now the boon denied,
 " They kiss'd her gushing tears, or pour'd their own,

" Grief wrung the Father's heart.—Along the vale
 " All desolate he roam'd, by man unseen;
 " Oft to the waste he told his piteous tale,
 " Or wail'd dejected o'er the pathless green.

" Yet still to Heaven resign'd, no voice severe
 " Accus'd the God who tames the stormy wave;
 " Who high enthroned o'er man's inferior sphere,
 " At will resumes th' unmeasured gifts he gave,

" His prayer at last th' eternal Father heard,
 " Pitying He heard, and lent a guiding ray;
 " His clouded brow returning pleasure cheer'd,
 " An Angel led him where a treasure lay.

" With joy elate, he eyed the shining ore;
 " To Heaven then ardent gave the hymn of praise;
 " Just, when its wrath dispersed his little store,
 " Yet kind to chasten whom it meant to raise.

Thus

Thus sung the Friend of Man. The feather'd Quire.

Still as the grove to Philomela's song,

Soon as low-murmuring ceased the vocal lyre,

Pour'd the full stream of swelling sounds along.

Still had I listen'd;—but the Power supreme

Check'd the rapt thought.—“Lo! where yon woods are
spread,

“Where yon cool grot o'erlooks the floating stream,

“Mark’st thou the Bard that haunts yon leafy shade?”

I look’d:—but ah! what transport thrill’d the soul,

When (his fair margin lined with hanging wood)

I saw proud Thames his mazy current roll,

And on his banks another Windfor stood?

Yet not the stream which sees Augusta rise,

Her spires high-towering o’er the sweeping tide;

A fairer prospect caught my wondering eyes,

And gentler scenes that balmy clime supplied.

Not here, where bloom’d whate’er the mind desires,

Throbb’d the pale Miser’s sickening heart for gain;

Not thro’ these groves, where every Muse inspires,

The Fleet rode thundering to the stormy main.

But

But near the grotto's deep and thoughtful gloom,
 Reclined at ease the Bard of Windsor lay;
 Behind, a smiling garden breathed perfume;
 Rich was its robe, and sacred from decay.

The spiry Obelisk's monumental base
 Still told the sighing heart Editha's name;
 The Mount's dark summit crown'd with clustering sprays
 Still bade his oaks preserve the Poet's fame;

¹ *But near the grotto's, &c.]* The reader who has seen Mr. Pope's seat at Twickenham, will immediately recognise the objects of this description. Such as have not enjoyed this pleasure will observe, that it is situated so near the bank of the Thames, as that a passenger going up the river can at a glance see through the openings of the grotto into the garden to which it leads. The principal objects which attract the eye of a stranger, upon going through the garden, are the obelisk which our poet has erected to the memory of his mother, and the little romantic mount which is raised of the same materials with the grotto. The obelisk is a square pillar shaped like a pyramid, with the following inscription on the base, which shews in so amiable a light the poet's filial tenderness.—

AN EDITHA!—MULIERUM OPTIMA,—MATRUM AMANTISSIMA:—VALE. The mount is overshadowed with some venerable old oaks, which form a recess cool, gloomy, and sequestered. It stands near one end of the garden, and its summit is inclosed in such a manner as to present only in front, through a long vista of trees, the spire of a town seen dimly and at a distance.

An

An elm's high boughs that wanton'd in the wind;
 Screen'd him :—the wood with acclamation rung;
 While o'er the stream on sapphire cars reclined,
 The blue-eyed Nymphs lay listening as he sung.

Of Shepherds piping o'er th' enamell'd mead,
 Th' unpractis'd Fair yet innocently coy;
 Of poplars bending to the tuneful reed,
 Of the steep torrent, and despairing boy;

Of Swains he told, untutor'd yet to guile,
 Whose spotless minds scarce knew the taint of sin;
 To joy alive, to Love's bewitching smile:
 Around was peace, and pleasure all within.

But ah! on earth can Pleasure e'er endure?
 O Ye, who ardent search her secret cell,
 Ere yet roll on the dark desponding hour,
 How vain your boast let Eloisa tell!

Lo! her wild step, abandon'd and alone,
 Roams the pale cloister's desolated round;
 Her tears, vain torrent! waste the flinty stone,
 And the long isles with Abelard resound.

Led by the taper's dim and flitting beam,
 While fond Remembrance points the venom'd dart,
 Swims the past hour in visionary dream;
 It fades! and Anguish stings the bleeding heart.

Nor yet to wake meek Pity's tender sigh,
 To paint stern Rage, or inly-wasting Woe,
 His only themes:—the philosophic eye
 Serene explored the sources whence they flow.

Of Man he sung, as in th' ascending scale
 Of being placed he seeks a dubious road,
 With impious hand would draw the sacred veil,
 That from the Creature screens th' informing God.

Himself unknown, his towering hope aspires,
 Vain wish! to know what Heaven's great Sire design'd;
 Nor sees His Power in yon ethereal fires,
 Nor marks His Wisdom beaming in the mind.

Rough passion tamed to Reason's strong controul,
 The temperate calm of cool deciding thought;
 These shew the God whose light illumines the soul,
 These point the deep-laid plan by Wisdom wrought.

Let

Let Judgment then with steady hand preside;

'Tis hers to tame rude Ire's unlicensed groan:

Check each fell impulse of presumptuous Pride,

Nor, form'd by others, call their search thine own.

Look round:—'Twas Instinct form'd the social chain:

Th' industrious ant, the mining mole behold:

This taught thee first to hoard the copious grain,

And that to dig the harrow'd earth for gold.

To join thy force in firm compacted band,

Where each assists, one power protecting all,

The Bees first taught by Nature's great command,

And round the close hive stretch'd the circling wall.

Deem'st thou, proud worm! the fix'd decrees of Fate

For thee bid Joy awake, or beauty shine?

The linnet sporting with his tuneful mate

Shares sweeter hope, and purer loves than thine.

Art thou the Lord of Nature's wide domains?

On nought beneath depends thy boasted crown?

Ere truth confirm the plea thy pride maintains,

—Go give the Goose her feather and her down.

Know

Know Heaven's great system marks a general end:

Each gains of pleasure his proportion'd share;

These in the scale advance, and those descend,

Each boon still balanced by its weight of care.

All speak th' Eternal's wisdom, bounty, power;

Great in the means, impartial in the doom!

Theirs is the present inoffensive hour,

And ⁱⁿ thine the hope that points beyond the tomb.

^{in Thine the hope, &c.} In the account here given of the writings of Pope, the author hath mentioned only those pieces, which entitle him to the character of a descriptive, or philosophical poet. His satires and translations are therefore omitted. The Rape of the Lock deserved indeed particular notice; but a full detail of its merit would have led the author into a train of images, which might have been deemed improper in a work professedly serious, and a cursory view, unequal to its excellence. For a similar reason the name of Addison is not taken notice of. This great man cannot claim, as a *Poet*, that high strain of panegyric, to which he is entitled as an *Essayist*, and a *Critic*. The author therefore rather chose to say nothing of him, than to make a faint encomium on so eminent a writer.

Such

Such was the moral lay; though bold, refined:
 Clear, full, melodious was each swelling note:
 Calm Reason's force, with ^a plastic Fancy join'd,
 Gave the ripe growth of strong and manly thought.

Still

^a *Plastic fancy, &c.*] That Pope joined to a clear and penetrating judgment the force of a creative imagination, is (in the author's opinion) clear from almost every part of his writings. It is strange; that the persons who will not allow him any extensive share of this last faculty, should yet make such high encomiums on his *Windsor Forest*, his *Rape of the Lock*, and his *Eloisa to Abelard*. The subjects of his didactic writings do not admit of that rich painting and exuberant imagery, which are conspicuous in the others; but it does not surely follow, (even supposing Pope never to have wrote a poem purely descriptive) that because a writer makes choice of such a subject, and treats it with judgment, he is disqualified, *merely on that account*, to do justice to another which requires imagination. Besides, it is an unquestionable truth, that an author who is capable of painting with strength and variety at one time, may be able to display the same talent on a similar subject at another.— With what propriety then can the poet, who, (to use the words of a late ingenious critic) throws out images, “which are truly sublime and strongly conceived, who adopts the strongest and boldest epithets in the English language, who by uniting the richest fancy with the most delicate satire, surpasseth even the excellence of Shakespear* ;” with what

* See an Enquiry into the Writings and Genius of Pope.

Still glow'd new prospects on my wondering gaze,
 But distant now the glimmering scenes were view'd ;
 The tower scarce trembled thro' the noon-day blaze,
 And the tall Forest touch'd the flaming cloud.

Yet still insatiate, the delighted eye
 O'er each soft shade with pleasing wonder ran :
 The Power whose rapt soul scans the boundless sky,
 Indulged my hope, and gentle thus began.

“ Amid yon woodland's deep and still retreat,
 “ Yon haunts that breathe of solitude and love,
 “ Bards yet unseen their tender tales repeat,
 “ And melting music steals along the grove.

what propriety can such a poet be said to have possessed only a moderate share of that faculty, to which he was indebted for this just encomium ? The learned and elegant critic who writes in this manner, ought rather to have regretted, that Pope did not always make choice of subjects which were suited to the sublimity of his genius, than to have asked in one part of his work, “ what there is very sublime, or very pathetic ” in an author, from whose writings he has extracted such pregnant examples of pathos and sublimity.

* Id. Dedication to Dr. Young.

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T

“ Yon

" Yon lawn thou seest, with rich inclosures crown'd ;
 " Not rude, but " rear'd in haste its fruits appear :
 " See, noxious weeds o'er-run the fertile ground,
 " And blight the promise of the smiling year.

" Yet far the worth that little fault o'er-pays :
 " Spring robes the mead, and fragrance scents the air,
 " With golden fruitage gleam the bending sprays,
 " And blooms the verdant dale profusely fair.

" 'Tis Dryden there, that sweeps the trembling strings,
 " Dim by yon spreading pine thou see'st him stand :
 " Hark ! the wild woods loud echoing as he sings !
 " The lyre resounding owns a Master's hand.

" From song to song, from theme to theme convey'd,
 " He thrills, exalts, transports, o'erwhelms the soul ;
 " His lays with such persuasive ardour plead,
 " Such rapid lightning whirls him to the goal.

• *Rear'd in haste, &c.*] This description of Dryden's situation alludes to the haste, and incorrect manner in which he was often compelled to write by the most powerful of all inducements, I mean that of indigence.

" Nor

- “ Nor blush, great Bard, that in thy glorious flight
“ Thine eye o’erlook’d what meaner minds survey :
“ A Fly can mark what ‘scapes an Eagle’s fight,
“ When shined sublime amid the blaze of day,

“ Light as the steed that bounds along the plain,
“ The heav’n-bred Genius darts to reach its aim ;
“ Behind, the leaden, dull, dejected train,
“ Creep on, and fearful start, but miss the game.

“ Beyond him far, scarce thro’ the opening wood
“ Thou mark’st yon mount that speaks the Master’s skill ;
“ Half-seen, it mixes with the azure flood :—
“ There reigns the sweet-tongued Bard of Cooper’s Hill.

“ Still like yon stream, smooth, easy, clear, serene,
“ Strong, yet harmonious, swell th’ instructive lays ;
“ The tree that shades, the flower that paints the scene,
“ Each to the mind some moral truth conveys.

“ In each young bud that decks the shaded vale,
“ Presumptuous Man ! thy fleeting life behold :
“ See it unfolding to the vernal gale !
“ Lo Summer tips its glittering leaves with gold !

- " Like thine its florid prime, its early doom,
 " Its velvet robe, its gay resplendent dies ;
 " But frosts untimely nip the withering bloom,
 " It droops, declines, and all its beauty flies.

 " So flies thy youth, a vain deluding dream ;
 " Vain, but when Virtue points to joy refined,
 " Pours thro' the gloom her bold enlivening beam,
 " And warms with future hope th' exulting mind.

 " Such is his strain ; while near a bubbling spring,
 " Screen'd by the mournful yew's projected shade,
 " Rapt Cowley listening hears the Poet sing,
 " And sighing lifts his melancholy head.

 " Sweet Bard ! But P form'd for solitude and ease,
 " Why toil'd thy step where storms and tempests rave ?
 " Thine were the arts that soften, while they please ;
 " Let others ride the black tumultuous wave.

" See,

P Form'd for solitude, &c.] Cowley, with a disposition formed to enjoy
 with exquisite relish the pleasures of retirement, was thrown by the acci-
 dents of life into the world, and after labouring for many years very
 effectually

" See, thro' the depth of yonder winding maze,

" Where Waller, blest with Saccharissa's charms,

" Now eyes her kindling with delighted gaze,

" Or clasps the smiling Beauty in his arms.

" Let these awake thy feeling heart to love :

" See o'er her neck the glossy locks descend :

" Serene she moves, the Goddess of the grove,

" Or sinks reclined on her protecting Friend.

" O blest ! whom Fancy from the bustling crew

" Selects, and grants to raise th' inspiring song :

" To these great Nature points each happier view,

" To these her first, her highest cares belong.

" To touch the string that vibrates to the heart,

" To mark each line more exquisitely fair,

" To feel each nicer stroke of mimic Art,

" The justest site, the most enlivening air,

effectually in the service of his country, without obtaining the reward due to his merit, integrity, and diligence, spent the last years of his life in an obscure solitude, from which he could never be prevailed upon to return to a court,

" She gives—The favour'd charge to Me consign'd;

" Then scans his Parent's work minutely o'er :

" What joy then opens on the wondering mind !

" How rapt, when Science spreads her treasured store !

" I rear the Stranger with a Parent's skill ;

" I give with warmth the conscious cheek to glow,

" Curb each strong effort of the headlong will,

" And thrill the breast with sympathetic woe.

" Oft at the still and silent hour of eve,

" I met him poring by the darksome cell,

" Beneath whose arch, unknowing to deceive

" Meek Hope, and dove-eyed Peace delight to dwell,

" There to his mind I point the paths of Truth ;

" There shew the faults of each uncertain plan,

" Raze the light follies of presumptuous youth,

" And in his bosom plant the love of man.

" For know, where'er the Muses deign to smile,

" Their softest balm the milder Passions shower ;

" Warm is th' ingenuous wish, untouch'd by guile,

" The soul all gentle, feeling, tender, pure.

" Thus

“ Thus form’d to Virtue, as inspired to sing,

“ When from the courts of bright and boundless day

“ They come,—these lawns that breathe perpetual Spring,

“ These bowers of Pleasure wake th’ unprompted lay.”

Here ceased the Power¹:—but to th’ enraptured ear

Such notes her soft persuasive voice convey’d,

As to the Saint some whispering Angels bear.—

I paused, and thus in fainter accents said :

“ Ah!

¹ *Here ceased the Power.*] Having now completed the principal design of this work, by exhibiting to view the characters and distinguishing excellencies of the most eminent British poets, it may not be improper to consider the encouragement which these illustrious writers, the ornaments of the ages in which they wrote, and the admiration of posterity, received from their countrymen.—The eminent merit of Chaucer, though he lived in a barbarous and illiterate age, procured him a powerful and generous patron in John duke of Lancaster, who recommended this *great Clerke* to Edward III. during whose reign he was raised to dignity and opulence. Involved in the fate of his patron, he was stript of all his employments in the succeeding reign, and was compelled to wander in a foreign country a wretched and needy fugitive. He returned indeed in his old age, but was never restored to the royal favour, and at last died in obscurity.—Spencer was still more unfortunate than his predecessor. Persecuted by the Lord Treasurer Burleigh from his first appearance at

- " Ah! grant me, Goddess, in this calm retreat,
 " Far from the haunt of busy man, to roam :
 " Ah! grant to Life's weak bark, by tempests beat,
 " So blest a refuge, so secure an home.

" To

the court of Elizabeth, he paid a long and fruitless attendance on *the Great*, an attendance, in certain circumstances, of all others the most disagreeable to an elegant and sensible mind; and deprived at last of an estate, which he obtained in Ireland, by the rebellion of the earl of Desmond, he returned to his native country, and died of a broken heart. Shakespear, born of parents who were unable to discover the propensity of his genius, was deprived of the advantages of a liberal education, and raised himself to notice by the force of his uncultivated and inimitable genius. Unsupported by a patron, he entered into a company of players; and might have died in indigence and obscurity like his predecessors, had he not acquired an independent fortune by his writings.—The fate of Cowley we have already mentioned; and that of Milton is well known. Denham and Waller were happy in being possessed of estates, which descended from their ancestors.—Posterity will observe with indignation, that the faults which are so conspicuous in the writings of Dryden, were occasioned by the two greatest obstructions to every noble effort of the human mind,—want and dependence. The former compelled him to suppress the exertions of his own genius, that he might please the taste of a corrupted age; the latter crushed the powers of his imagination, and limited the freedom of his sentiments.—Thomson had indeed the good
 for-

" To search, to mark, to seize the glittering spoil,
 " Let these the Miser's low-born thought employ;
 " But say, what prize rewards the Muse's toil?
 " Yields her superior aim th' expected joy?

" Ah

fortune to be patronized by some men of taste and genius, who rendered his life easy, and did honour to his memory.—Pope, like Shakespear, purchased independence by the sale of his works. Such has been the fate of some of the greatest geniuses, of whom any age or country can reasonably boast. Let us not however be so partial as to ascribe this series of unhappy events altogether to ingratitude, or even to the bad taste of a rude and undistinguishing people. Calm reflection will suggest other, and perhaps juster causes, from which these effects may be traced. The talents which form an accomplished writer, and those which qualify a man for rising in life, are in themselves essentially different, and are very seldom united in any one person. Indeed it is scarce possible that this union can take place, unless in some very uncommon and particular instances. The man of letters is formed in solitude; the man of the world, in society. It is evident, that, before these can be properly blended, an affluent fortune must concur with native genius, and with a disposition suited to make a moderate use both of solitude and society. Where these advantages do not meet together, the man of letters becomes proud, sullen, reserved, from the inward consciousness of superior merit, joined with little experience of life or manners; and thus the disagreeable companion effaceth the impression which is made by the writer. Diffidence and Modesty,

- " Ah no! Pale Envy's green and baleful eye
 " Blights the rich wreath around her temples twined;
 " Or Want forbids her moulted wings to fly,
 " Or Care's bleak mildews damp th' aspiring mind.

 " Unfit to soothe mean Pride's presumptuous scheme,
 " Untaught soft Flattery's smooth and guileful art;
 " On Guilt's dark shrine to pour the Muse's beam,
 " Or mimic Gladness with a bursting heart;

 " To check th' indignant glance, when wanton Power,
 " Throned on the mouldering wrecks she joys to raise,
 " Rifles desponding Virtue's little store,
 " Or pines when Truth confers th' impartial praise:

dety, which are likewise the attendants of Genius, however amiable in themselves, are yet by no means calculated to render their possessor opulent. They are shades indeed, which heighten the graces of merit to the discerning;—but they are shades likewise, which conceal it from the giddy and superficial. If we add to these causes the envy which eminence in any profession naturally excites, we shall account, at least in a great measure, for the narrow and contracted circumstances, in which men of genius are permitted to live.

“ These

" These arts unknown, ah! in the peaceful grot,
" Where sleeps meek Innocence, a blameless guest,
" Calm let me sit, from life's vain scenes remote,
" And weary press the downy couch of Rest."

With pity trembling o'er her placid mien,
With looks that bade each meaner care subside,
Indulgent near me smiled the lonely Queen,
And lenient thus with soothing voice replied.

" Then would'st thou quit the post assign'd by Heaven,
" To spend thy years in listless ease away?
" Marks not thy thought, by lawless frenzy driven,
" Truth's form divine, and Judgment's guiding ray?

" Not thus the train who haunt these blissful bowers:
" Like thee on Life's tumultuous ocean cast,
" They broke the billows with collected powers,
" Look'd to the future, nor deplored the past.

" Was Virtue's prize an unsubstantial name,
" Not then had Hope impatient eyed the goal;
" Nor Heaven with strength had steel'd the manly frame,
" Nor placed the lamp of Reason in the soul.

" 'Tis

" 'Tis Man's, ere yet th' important end is gain'd,

" His post to guard, to strengthen, to defend;

" Wretch, deem'd by Wisdom for thyself ordain'd,

" Know'st thou the ties of Brother or of Friend?

" Though born to bear, 'tis not thy task alone;

" See, even thy Foe participates the care;

" Pale in thy lowering fate he marks his own;

" Thus all combine to soothe, and one to share.

" As thus thy sorrow claims another's aid,

" Thy daring deed another's smile repays;

" Tell, when th' embattled legion stands display'd,

" Will he who forms the ranks disdain the praise?

" Whence is Ambition's bold and noble aim?

" Why leaps th' impassion'd breast at Glory's call?

" Why fluttering pants the beating heart for fame,

" If Joy, to one confined, regards not all?

" Thus All connected form the social band,

" With Nature's birth th' important league began;

" Who breaks its law disclaims th' almighty hand,

" That world to world conjoin'd, and Man to Man.

" Yet

" Yet rush not headlong to the worse extreme ;
" Nor form'd for life, be Solitude unsought :
" Mine is the gentle, yet the piercing beam,
" That opes the buds of slow progressive thought.

" When Passion shoots her lightning from the eye,
" I curb the Fury in her wild career ;
" Or, as the thrill'd heart heaves the pitying sigh,
" Bid Reason whisper to the listening ear.

" She, meek-eyed Queen, to calm th' internal war,
" Serenely mild, assumes her awful throne :
" O'erawed, th' inferior Powers attend her bar ;
" Even Rage reluctant checks his bursting groan.

" Chain'd at her foot impetuous Frenzy lies,
" Fell Envy gnaws her rankling lips in vain ;
" Hate from her grasp unlocks th' arrested prize,
" And Rancour muttering churns the galling rein.

" When Night o'ershadowing lulls the world to rest,
" Oft to my cell her graceful steps are borne ;
" There, like the orient star that gilds the east,
" She pours the soft effusive rays of morn.

" Her

- " Her step pursue thro' Life's perplexing road,
 " Cool'd, when she calls each murmuring plaint to cease:
 " Her voice exalts th' illumined soul to God;
 " She walks with Nature, and her paths are Peace.

 " Thus taught, when Earth reclaims its kindred clay,
 " When Death's long sleep dissolves thy mortal frame;
 " Here may'st thou rest, while some melodious lay
 " In tuneful notes consigns thy praise to fame:

 " That not by Envy stain'd, nor duped by Pride,
 " That not o'erpower'd by Fancy's dazzling beam;
 " Still prone to soften where thou could'st not hide,
 " Calm thought o'erlook'd, as Nature sketch'd thy theme."

She said,—and gradual from the sight withdrew;

Weak as the murmur of the dying gale,
 Stole her last breath, while on th' unbended view
 Rush'd the dark wood, and solitary dale.

PARADISE;

P O E M.

— — O QUI ME GELIDIS SUB MONTIBUS HÆMI
SISTET, ET INGENTI RAMORUM PROTEGET UMBRA!

V I R G.

P A R A D I S E

P O B

O QUI ME ORIBUS SUB MONITUS HEMI

ET INCENTIVAMONUM PROTECTI CARBA

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE following little attempt was undertaken at the desire of the Gentleman who raised the elegant Villa, whose various scenery it is intended to describe. The Author hopes that such of his Readers, as know how difficult it is to give a sensible mind entertainment, in the perusal of a descriptive poem of any length, will excuse him, if he has upon some occasions indulged himself very freely in the vein of moral sentiment, arising naturally from the subject; as others, who may have observed that, in consequence of the many elegant productions of this kind which have lately made their appearance, it is an arduous, if not an impossible task, to throw an air of originality on this species of composition, will perhaps be inclined to pardon him, if they find that he has sometimes attempted to diversify the description, by admitting bolder images than are usually employed in painting what is called Still or Rural Life. The Writer's intention will

be fully answered, if his Readers should receive some part of that pleasure from perusing the transcript, which he himself felt in contemplating, and in copying the original.

THE following is a transcript of the original, which the Gentleman who raised the elegant Villa, whose various scenery it is intended to describe. The Author hopes that such of his Readers, as know how difficult it is to give a faithful and entertaining, in the present of a descriptive poem of any length, will excuse him if he has upon some occasions indulged himself very freely in the use of moral sentiment, mixing naturally from the subject; as others, who may have observed that in consequence of the many elegant productions of this kind which have lately made their appearance, it is an art, if not an impossible task, to it new as air of originality. The species of composition, will probably be intended to pardon him, if they find that he has sometimes attempted to diversify the description, by admitting dialogues, which are already employed in painting what is called still or dead life. The Author's intention will

PA R A

P A R A D I S E.

OF rural scenes I sing;—the winding stream,
 The grove, the garden, form the simple theme:
 Hail to the woodland shade, the peaceful vale!
 Ye dark retreats, ye bowers of Quiet, hail!
 These, when improved by Science, Taste, and Thought, 5
 Art moulds the plan by forming Nature wrought;
 Dimm'd by no cloud like Life's eventful day,
 First claim'd, and still awake, th' inspiring lay.

Lo! mid yon arch of shading pines display'd,
 What form ethereal roams th' incumbent shade! 10
 'Tis she!—the meek-eyed Genius of the grove,
 Whose thrill'd heart vibrates to the plaint of love:
 Oft, as along the solitary plain
 Lured by the dying lute's melodious strain,
 Pensive she roves;—the hill's aerial brow, 15
 The vales beneath with deeper verdure glow;

The love-lorn swain suspends his mournful tale,
 Struck with the sound that trembles on the gale,
 Lifts to the feeble voice, (the form unseen)
 And deems that Fairies tread the haunted green. 26

Woo'd by yon scene, where Art's controuling power
 Shapes the bold arch, or weaves the sheltering bower;
 Yon gardens swelling on the wandering gaze,
 The lawn's loose robe, the wood's bewildering maze,
 The couch where panting Labour shares repose, 25
 The stream gay-gleaming through the mingling boughs,
 Fruits heap'd like those on Eve's luxurious board;—
 She deems the scene—a Paradise restored.

Led by the Power, I gaze entranced around,
 And eye th' o'er shading hills, an awful mound! 30
 The crescent-heights half-circling round the dale,
 Inclose a fruitful field, a temperate vale.^a
 Crown'd with rough wood the pendent cliffs are seen,
 Shades still beloved, and boughs for ever green;

^a *A temperate vale.*] The beautiful little Villa, described in this Poem, lies on a plain, around which the hills form an amphitheatre, and leave an opening only to the south, where the surface is smooth, and almost perfectly level.

Form'd, when the eddy'ing blast's resistless sway 35
 Sweeps the proud dome, or yielding arch away,
 To shield the plain, where its refreshing breath
 Shakes the loose bank, or murmurs o'er the heath,
 So Tempe screen'd by cloudy Pelion's brow,
 So Arno spread where gales ethereal blow, 40
 (Gay Florence dancing on the swelling wave)
 Lie calm, nor hear the distant tempest rave.

BUT lo! the beauteous scenes unfolding fair,
 Yon walk invites ^b to breathe the scented air!
 Say, whence great Nature, that elysian bloom? 45
 Whence blows the fragrant gale that wafts perfume?
 Whence all the sweets yon leafy groves exhale?
 Yon melting notes that breathe along the vale?
 Thou mighty Parent! bid'st the liberal grain,
 Or field wide-ripening glad th' exulting swain; 50

^b *Yon walk invites, &c.*] A noble avenue of pines (the loftiest and most magnificent the Author remembers to have seen) through the void betwixt which fruit-trees are seen, dropt at some distance on the grass-plots; while a vista, opening in the front, discovers the gardens and wilderness, and a continued bank of flowers lines either side of the walk.

To toil consign't the pebble and the ore ;
 But Taste displays the wonders of thy power.
 She smoothed yon level green, and called to view
 The banks that glow with each resplendent hue ;
 Dropt the rich fruitage o'er each velvet bed, 55
 And rear'd her train beneath th' indulgent shade.
 So, oft in Life's sequester'd vale, unknown,
 Unheeded Genius blooms and wastes alone ;
 Unseen, who sport in Power's imperial dome,
 She woos the haunt where Quiet loves to roam ; 60
 There just beheld, (her hour of pastime o'er)
 Veil'd in the waving umbrage, shines no more,

RANGED in long rows yon gloomy pines appear,
 In awful height! nor heed the varying year :
 Their shade, impervious to the noon-day beam, 65
 Prompts Thought and Fancy's soul-entrancing dream.
 O when meek Eve, (each sultry breath withdrawn)
 Shakes her loose dew-drops o'er th' aerial lawn ;
 When Ire subsides in each dissolving breast,
 And Quiet whispering soothes the soul to rest ; 70
 Be mine yon arch o'ercastr'd with darkening sprays,
 Yon haunt where rapt, lone Contemplation strays!

There

There musing deep as Nature points the theme,
Let thought explore frail Life's mysterious dream :
See Hope's gay pile by sweeping blasts o'erturn'd 75
Or Pride low-groveling on the dust it spurn'd ;
Stain'd on Ambition's front th' o'ershading plume,
Or chill'd on Beauty's cheek the withering bloom ;
Fled with the wreath that glow'd on Fancy's brow,
Her dream that glitter'd like th' aerial bow ; 80
Care's tearful eyes in death-like slumbers prest,
And Toil reclining where the weary rest.

Lo ! where yon woodbine bower invites repose,
A Fairy-court, a swelling garden blows ;
Rear'd on its verge, where Art projects to please, 85
A couch luxuriant lures the sons of ease.
See clustering round, in varying foliage clad,
Gay Flora's train that paints th' enamel'd bed ;
The tulip cast in Nature's fairest mould,
The violet's purple robe inwove with gold ; 90
The cowslip's honied eye, and by the gale
Bent low, the flower that gilds the lonely vale ;
Or pure Narcissus, bathed in morning dew,
Or thyme light-streak'd with heav'n's ethereal blue ;

Carnations varying as autumnal skies, 95
 And pinks illumed with Beauty's spangling dies.

HERE oft 'tis said beneath wan Cynthia's ray,
 Thy train, Titania, sport their hours away.
 Oft to yon bank the glittering throng repair,
 (Pure forms, that lightly skim the fluid air;) 100
 Intent to catch the liquid dews, or shed
 The dropping unguents o'er each scented bed;
 Or suck from oils th' ethereal sweets, and breathe
 The cloud whose balm o'er spreads the wilds beneath;
 Then waning as the twinkling lamps decay, 105
 Pale on the fading moon-beam glide away.

STRETCH'D on the couch, as with delighted eyes
 I scan the scenes, what smiling prospects rise!
 Here edged with hawthorn lies the daised green,
 There glows with blushing fruit th' unfolding scene; 110
 Or Villas gay with circling fields appear;
 Or streams low-murmuring lure th' enchanted ear;
 Or seen remote, far on the upland height,
 Dim waves the brown wood on the darkening fight;
 Yet pass the year; and lo! with frowns o'er cast, 115
 Stern Winter freezing, lays its glories waste!

Touch'd

Touch'd by his hand, the fleeting verdure o'er,
Dank mildews withering taint the leafy store;
Till wandering thoughtful o'er the bowers o'erthrown,
The eye scarce marks where once their beauty shone. 120

SUCH, to calm Thought's experienced eye display'd,
O'er Life's fair morning sweeps th' involving shade.
Serene and rapt by Pleasure's glittering dream,
The youth leaps headlong on the surgy stream;
See on its bank the golden fruitage glow, 125
Or drinks ripe nectar from the tempting bough;
Or marks the cooling shades with eager eye
Elate, nor joyous deems the tempest nigh.
When lo! the clouds grow black! the winds assail!
Age chills the blood, or poison taints the gale; 130
Where then the scenes that held th' enraptured view?
Gay dreams of love, and joys for ever new?
Ah! where the hopes of mirthful Fancy born?
The forms resplendent as the dews of morn?
Young charms that dance in Love's desiring eyes? 135
The kindling chace, and soul-inchanting prize?
False as yon varying lawns th' illusive toys;
An hour unfolds them, and an hour destroys.

O MID this scene, where low'ring thunders roll,
 Be mine calm Reason's strong, but just controul; 140
 When dies th' o'erwhelm'd heart to grief consign'd;
 When Passion's whirlwind tears the maddening mind;
 Or panting Hope scarce marks the dreary shore;
 Or melts the breast to Pleasure's guileful lore:
 O grant the placid look, the soul serene, 145
 The temperate wish that keeps the golden mean!
 The plan mature, by cool Experience wrought,
 The piercing beam of clear discerning Thought;
 Desires by Judgment's guiding dictate sway'd,
 And pure from Passion's mists th' exploring head: 150
 Thus strong to break the headlong torrent's force,
 Glides the smooth bark as Wisdom points her course;
 Till borne afar, where never tempest blows,
 The Wanderer rest in long and deep repose.

BUT hark! what sounds along the murmuring gale, 155
 Soothe the rapt ear from some sequester'd dale!
 I search their source, and half to sight display'd,
 Mark the broad stream that lines the glimmering shade;
 With curious eye I glance the prospect o'er,
 Nor pleased with transient objects, pant for more: 160
 And

And lo! the river rolling to the main,
 Winds its slow course along th' extended plain;
 Seen from the gloom of yonder mossy seat^c.
 That verging o'er it forms a deep retreat!
 No artful shades here hold th' admiring gaze, 165
 Nor flower-clad bank, nor wild's bewildering maze,
 No garden floating wafts divine perfume,
 Nor glows the nectar'd fruit's enlivening bloom:
 But on yon beetling cliff with clouds o'ercastr'd,
 Roams the lone Genius of the cheerless waste, 170
 Sublime of thought; and from the airy brow
 Eyes the dim forms that shade the fields below;
 The elm first tinged with morn's resplendent flame
 (Thus soars proud Hope to catch the rays of Fame)
 The flexile willow, like experienced age 175
 Not torn though yielding to the tempest's rage;
 'The oak deep-rooted in the strengthening soil,
 Like Patience fix'd mid peril, war and toil;

^c *Yonder mossy seat.*] A little sequestered arbor reared on the bank of the river, and over-shaded with birch, limes, &c. from which the eye commands a magnificent prospect of the contiguous eminencies covered on all sides with wood; and the winding of a river which is skirted by a beautiful little village, and by the gentleman's seat, who is proprietor of the whole.

The humble shrub by nature taught to bow,
 Screen'd in the storm that lays the mighty low : 180
 All these he marks ;—then musing on the tomb
 That house of silence, seeks th' involving gloom.

O ROUND the bower ye warblers of the grove
 Pour the wild notes that melt the soul to love !
 Shrill from the echoing wood's remotest bound, 185
 The thrush rejoicing breathe the chearful sound :
 The linnet warbling o'er the purple heath,
 Supply the melting flute's melodious breath ;
 Wide o'er the founding stream by zephirs born.
 The black-birds music mock th' inspiring horn : 190
 Or grant meek Power, when glimmering on the view,
 The pale ray lingers on the quivering dew ;
 Roll'd o'er the middle waste, or echoing dale,
 To hear the plover's long resounding wail !

How blest, who led by Solitude, repair, 195
 To dells remote, and breathe a purer air !
 Who tired in noisy life's perplexing chase,
 Rest from its tumult in the vale of peace !
 'Tis theirs to feel (what treasures ne'er impart,)
 Th' ingenuous wish that warms the feeling heart ; 200
 Theirs

Theirs, near some darkening cliff, or haunted stream,
 To melt intranced in Thought's luxurious dream :
 Or when some angel from the climes of love
 Descending, hovers o'er the conscibus grove ;
 'Tis theirs, when heavenly anthems hymn'd around, 205
 On air wide floating swells the mazy sound ;
 Soul meeting soul (the earthly mound o'erthrown,)
 To join the throng that watch th' eternal throne !

RAPT from th' imbowering shade, and warbling throng,
 New scenes inviting claim the varying song. 210
 Yon gardens shelter'd in the circling bound,
 Where limes and hawthorns fence th' inclosure round ;
 Yon field, where taught in twining folds to roll,
 The tall hops creep around the tapering pole :
 The spreading pines in silver foliage clad ; 215
 Th' espaliers rear'd to form a cooling shade,
 The visted porch, and fading on the sight,
 Seen dim, the ruin'd tower's portentous height^d :
 Each claims the strain :—but glancing o'er the whole,
 The Muse impetuous, hastes to reach the goal. 220

^d *The ruin'd tower's portentous height.*] An old ruinous edifice placed near the entrance of the scene here described.

As thoughtful o'er each beauteous scene I rove ;
The wild bewildering lures me from the grove ;
Spread o'er the formless hills with shrubs o'ergrown,
The mazy windings lead the wanderer on.
Now breathing Æther on the mountain's brow, 225
Now plunged deep-musing in the vale below ;
Luxurious scenes with Nature's bounty fraught
That boast no mark of Art's chastising draught,
But shooting wild, and devious as they spread,
The whole loose forest waving o'er his head 230
Delightful maze ! he sees the woods extend
Far as he roams ; nor marks, nor hopes their end.

O WRAP me deep beneath yon aery hill
Where down the rough rock steals the tinkling rill ;
The woodland throng, as varying thoughts prevail, 235
Bathed in the stream, or swimming down the vale !
There grant to hear in depth of woods embraced,
Each lingering sound that wails along the waste !
Or near some haunted oak, forlorn and bare,
Where glide pale Druids on the murky air ; 240
Slow down the pealing cliff remote and drear,
The wizar'd Genii plain on Fancy's ear !

HENCE

HENCE borne sublime o'er ages long decay'd,
 The muse aspiring sails th' incumbent shade :
 Sees, long ere tamed by Thought, by Taste refined, 245
 Strong Reason's force had curb'd th' untutor'd mind ;
 Long ere Astræa spread her golden reign,
 And taught to rule the earth, or roam the main,
 One shapeless wild o'er each broad region shown ;
 One boundless desert stretch'd from zone to zone. 250
 Then, where Augusta, thy exalted brow
 O'erlooks the lawns, and swelling deeps below,
 Screen'd by the waste of woods, that wrapt the day
 Lay slumbering Art, and dream'd the years away.
 Nor yet bold Industry, though versed in pain, 255
 Or plough'd the glebe, or srow'd the liberal grain,
 A woodland Power, roused with the early morn,
 He launch'd the dart, or blew the echoing horn ;
 With rankling heart pursued the murderous trade ;
 And man the savage, as he call'd, obey'd. 250

NOR Fancy less, young Nature's darling child,
 In silence wondering, gazed the trackless wild :
 Not then the solemn pile, the trembling spire,
 The grott's cool shade, the cultured fields inspire :

The

The cloud, the whirlwind her majestic theme, 265
 The dim rock tottering o'er the turbid stream,
 The wood's deep gloom, the melancholy vale
 Or cave long-ecchoing heard her midnight wail;
 Tales ever mournful taught her voice to flow;
 Still plain'd the lute, yet pour'd melodious woe. 270

[*Yet pour'd melodious woe.*] The truth of the remark made in the Poem that, in the uncultivated periods of society, Imagination is much more apt to take in a mournful than a chearful train of ideas, must be obvious to every person who considers either the objects that present themselves to be contemplated in such a state, or that strain of composition which appears to have prevailed in it. With regard to the former, we may observe that wherever the mind has a native propensity to dwell upon great and exalted objects, it is likewise ready to contemplate principally the dark side of human life, even when an assemblage of the most chearful ideas might be supposed to make its thoughts run in a more agreeable channel. The works of Nature beheld in their naked simplicity, tend naturally to excite both these sensations in a mind endowed with an extensive imagination: the former arising from their rude magnificence, the latter from that gloomy idea of Solitude which we invariably associate with the other.—As to the strain of composition which obtained at this period, the works of Ossian (to mention no others) afford sufficient specimens of the manner, in which the works of nature have been contemplated by a great genius in the earliest state of society.

Thus

Thus roll'd the years, till with her radiant train
Astræa lighting, eyed the waste domain:

On Thames' smooth bank she stood, and from the bower
Where Art lay slumbering, waked th' informing power.

"Go, (thus she spoke) recal yon Wanderers home: 275

"Go rear the garden, and exalt the dome.

"Seen from yon hill the checquer'd landscape glow,

"Gay meads and villas glad th' expanse below;

"An Indian sun the shelter'd groves illumine,

"The gale breathe fragrance, and the garden bloom; 280

"Yon mount, the pile and swelling arch adorn;

"Yon plain, the copious herbs and waving corn:

"Go,—on the bafe indulgent Nature yields,

"Extend dark woods, and cultivated fields:

"Streams, Villas, shades in beauteous range combine, 285

"And scenes still varying wake th' inspiring nine."

SHE spoke; and far along the waste convey'd

To man the Powers supplied unceasing aid,

Call'd from the cavern's depth th' unletter'd kind;

Taught milder arts, and humanized the mind. 290

Then too bold Industry the chase gave o'er,

By nobler works allured, and gentler lore;

Smiled the bleak waste obsequious as he came,
 Prone dropt the woods, their wondering sons grew tame:
 The City rose:—and now with transport moved,
 Rejoicing Nature gazed, admired, and loved,
 Then swell'd the scenes that boast immortal strains,
 Proud Hampton's towers¹, and Richmond's airy plains;
 Or Windsor's shades where sports the tuneful throng,
 Shades loved of Thought, and streams renown'd in song.
 Each lyre was strung as prompting Genius fired;
 While Cowper's bowers, and Grongar's dales inspired²:
 Still o'er thy groves fair Kensington, appears

¹ *Proud Hampton's towers, &c.*] Should Readers of a certain cast observe here that there is an impropriety in the Author's having described the world in general as a desert, when he enters upon this part of his subject, l. 243, &c. yet when he comes to take notice of subsequent improvements, he mentions those only that have been made upon Great-Britain; the Author would reply, that he avoided extending the description in this place, as it would have run the Poem to too great length; and the candid Reader will observe, that the mind is particularly prepared for having British scenes presented to it, as Art is found lumbering on the bank of the Thames, and in the spot where London now stands,

² *And Grongar's dales inspired:*] See the beautiful descriptive Poem with that title in Doddsley's Collection.

Near

Near Albion's haunt, pale Kenna bathed in tears;¹
 Reckless of Oberon's wrath, the pensive fair
 Eyes the wán flower that blows in chilling air;
 Hangs o'er the tremulous leaf, and gives to rear
 Its head the first, and lead the smiling year.

WROUGHT, as the Powers their various work pursue,
 Where'er I look new wonders charm the view.
 But chief the Muse those blissful scenes transport,
 Where warm'd with love, th' inspiring nine resort.
 Oft as her eye o'er beauteous Hagley strays,
 She marks them sporting in harmonious maze,
 Still pleas'd to trace by just degrees refined
 In each some grace that paints the master's mind;

Nor less, (though Pity, Love, and Tears unite,)
 Thy villa Shenstone holds her wandering sight.
 O loved of Heav'n! by forming Nature wrought
 To mark her dawn of pure and simple thought!
 Happy, whose heart its warmest wish could tell,
 And blest, whose numbers paint that heart so well.

¹ *Pale Kenna bathed in tears:*] See Tickel's Fairy Tale, entitled Ken-
 fington Garden, in Dodsley's Collection.

Though fled to climes of harmony and love,
 Yet swims thy shade o'er yon aerial grove;
 With Thomson, skill'd to swell melodious sound; 325
 Born on the gale that fans the bowers around,
 Yon sylvan dome thou seek'st, yon ivied wall!
 Or near the 'lone and dying water-fall
 Tune'st the soft lute; while each enchanting lay
 Floats o'er the stream, and trembling melts away. 330

LAST Caledonia, thy deserted plain
 Felt the young Powers, and bless'd their opening reign.
 Then rose, (ere smiling o'er the happy land
 Fair Peace triumphant rear'd her olive wand:)
 High o'er the hanging cliff beheld afar 335
 The gothic porch, and domes announcing war.
 Hence on the dizzy rock's stupendous brow,
 Edina's thundering towers repell'd the foe:
 Gay Fortha too beheld with conscious pride
 Th' ascending piles that edged his glossy tide: 340
 O'er Clyde majestic rose the solemn fane;
 O'er Tay, rough mounds that check'd the barbarous Dane;
 Each distant stream th' enlivening Powers explore,
 And spires high-towering lined her utmost shore.

THUS

THUS while her sons untamed, (her fields yet bare), 345
 War all their trade, and conquest all their care ;
 Each nobler virtue deem'd that asks acclaim,
 Each good compris'd in courage, strength, and fame.
 But when fair Science, thy refulgent ray
 Burst the black gloom, and roll'd the clouds away ; 350
 Then bloom'd the waste in heav'n's prolific beam,
 Then danced the Naiad on the silver stream ;
 Then varying scenes their vivid hues unfold,
 Lawns bright in lucid green, or spangling gold ;
 Glad hamblets graced with flowery skirts appear, 355
 And Ceres liberal crown'd the laughing year.

THUS fair Britannia each indulgent shade,
 Each waving grove with kindling joy survey'd.
 Nor ceased the Powers ;—but where yon lengthening waste
 (An age o'erlook'd ;) no rich inclosure graced ; 360
 Even there, while Art with judging Taste combin'd
 Form'd the fair draught in G—'s inventive mind,
 O'er plains remote, now kindling on the view ;
 On ——'s smooth bank, an Eden bloom'd anew.

ÆOLIAN ODE.

MONARCH of the gloomy waste,
Where wildly roars the yelling blast,
From the drear' and hollow cave,
Where Kilda hears the howling wave,
Whence, as strong tempests shake the dome,
Fear deems the shrieking ghost to roam ;
And on the earth that heaves beneath,
His white hair gleaming o'er the heath,
Far wailing on the sea-beat shore,
Stands the dim Wizzard pale and hoar !
There muttering, pours his magic strain
O'er the land, and o'er the main ;
And calls the swelling blasts around,
(The blast obeys the solemn sound)

To whelm some death-devoted foe,
Hung on the skied wave's misty brow,
Where never heart-struck Widow's lore,
Nor Orphan's wail shall wake them more!

COME ;—but not with thundering car,
Nor trumpet hoarse announcing war ;
But breathe such music mild and clear,
As won young Eve's delighted ear ;
What time on Taurus' glimmering brow,
While infant Nature smiled below,
Thy first cool breath of temperate air,
Flutter'd her locks of dewy hair :
Hence, when along some lengthening bay,
Gleams the broad sun's departing ray ;
Afar, in bowers remote and still,
She lingers on the breezy hill ;
Then, as the browner shades prevail,
Gives her loose plumage to the gale ;
Slow-floating, as the zephirs bear
Her pall, that melts on purple air,
While mist light-swimming veils the skies,
Bathes in the liquid cloud, and dies.

Nor whispering thus, alone impart
 What fills the roused and throbbing heart;
 But when intranced, to worlds on high,
 Pale Thought directs his trembling eye;
 When seen dim gliding on the beam,
 He marks the vision's meteor gleam;
 Ah! then thy gentlest powers inspire,
 To wake the wild Æolian lyre!
 And while along the quivering strings
 Flit their light hands and trembling wings,
 O breathe such notes remote and low!
 O pour such wail of solemn woe!
 As prompts the flow soul-thrilling sigh,
 As steals the dew from Pity's eye.
 Or in Affliction's darkest hour,
 When baleful stars exert their power;
 When o'er the wretch, with eager hand,
 Keen Fury shakes the fiery brand;
 Wake then the sound, whose magic art
 Melts the dire Fiend's remorseless heart;
 And hangs, an image fix'd on air,
 With hand outstretch'd, and flaming hair!

Such,

SUCH, when thy milder race prevail,
 Breathe melting notes along the gale.
 But when in all thy terrors clad,
 Wild on the steep hill's darkening head
 Thou standest; and round thy gloomy train,
 Yelling to the shrinking main:
 When the Dragon North in haste,
 Howling, rushes to the waste;—
 Be mine some temple-beaten tower,
 Bared to the rude wind's angry roar,
 The mark of many a blast, that bears
 Unmoved the shock of jarring spheres:
 There bid thy mightier sons repair,
 With wings that shade the boundless air;
 Then headlong rushing down the steep,
 Heave from its base the troubled deep;
 Or from the groaning forest, swell
 O'er the long waste the distant yell,
 That mid' the doubling isles, afar
 Low-murmuring pours the peal of war.

OFT' let me hear the hollow tread,
 Along the glimmering wall convey'd;

Or

Or voice that calls the mourner home,
 Low-welling from the haunted dome !
 What time rude winds, or driving rain,
 Shake some scath'd plank or shatter'd pane,
 But chief, when Night involving all,
 O'er Nature spreads her raven pall;
 When flies, loose-fritter'd to the gale,
 Her matron robe, and fainted veil;
 When thundering on the steady mound,
 The strong blast beats, and howls around :
 O give the circling down to close
 The form stretch'd soft in still repose !
 And as the tremulous couch beneath,
 Stirr'd, as with Zephyr's quivering breath,
 Feels mid' the war of rageful powers,
 The storm that rocks the nodding towers :—
 O waft me then to climes of love,
 As magic Fancy paints the grove !
 To plains which gentler suns illumine,
 Where Summer breathes eternal bloom :
 Thus mid' the roar of tempests blest,
 Inspire new dreams, and deeper rest !

Along the glimmering wall convey'd ;

O! BY the cliff remote and hoar,
 Eyed on lone Flannan's faintest shore^a!
 Whence on thy wings, along the main—
 The Curlew breathes his solemn strain;
 By the spirits deem'd to wail
 In death-like sounds, when o'er the vale
 Howling on the trembling ear,
 Thy voice proclaims the tempest near;
 By the mountain-shading pile,
 By the rocks on Rona's isle^b;
 By the harp, whose dying moan
 Lifts the rapt soul to worlds unknown;
 Or thundering voice that rends the skies;
 Power sublime, arise! arise!

^a The isles of Flannan are among the most remote and uncultivated of the Hebrides. The inhabitants of the neighbouring islands repair to these at a particular season of the year, for the eggs of those sea-fowls which breed in multitudes upon the rocks. For a particular account of the ceremonies observed upon this occasion, in those desert isles, which superstition appears to have consecrated, the Reader may consult Martin's Account of the Western Isles.

^b Another of the Western Isles,

Hark! He comes!—that rattling shower,
 That peal bespeaks th' approaching Power,
 Rouzed in his dank and sounding cave,
 Yon loose isle tottering, feels him heave!
 He bursts!—I see him dark and bare,
 Lowering on the waste of air!
 Around, his giant-offspring stands,
 Shaking each a hundred hands:
 Boreas there, aloft display'd,
 Rears Medusa's Gorgon head;
 And by the icy locks upheld,
 Whirls, as he comes, the withering shield:
 Black clouds before, in loose array
 Wide spreading, point his rapid way;
 Where roaring, from the freezing zone,
 He drives the lagging tempest on.

Nor Auster less, with fury driven,
 Effays to bloat the eye of heaven.

I see his form inspiring dread,
 Dire on the vast of æther spread;

The

Th' Atlantic's waste resounding far,
 Swells his deep blast that calls to war.
 From climes that burning Phœbus loves;
 From bubbling springs and lucid groves;
 From lakes that breathe a blasting steam,
 From fens of blue and livid gleam,
 Slow doubling o'er the dusky skies,
 He bids the dire Tornado rise.
 High on the column's blazing spire,
 Sublime he rides with wings of fire;
 And wielding stern the forky brand,
 Hangs lowering o'er some guilty land.

KEEN Eurus from his sea-green bed,
 His plumes with blighting dews o'erlaid,
 Near, from his rank and venom'd store,
 Scatters blue plagues, and mildews hoar.

LAST in the mighty concourse stands
 The Power that sweeps o'er burning sands;
 Whose hands from young Aurora tear
 The crimson pall, and saffron hair.
 Raised on the pillar'd cloud he soars,
 That whelms dry Afric's desert shores;

Half

Half thro' the eddying dust beheld
 His blazing helm, and fiery shield :
 Before, his far-spread banner flies,
 Its length illumed with spangling dyes ;
 While kindling to its utmost bound,
 The wide horizon flames around.

BEHIND, his younger race appears ;
 The gale that bends the golden ear ;
 The train that waft from every flower
 Its balm, to Flora's leafy bower.
 I see their wings of every hue,
 Clear as the pure and spangling dew ;
 Their films of loosely-flowing hair,
 Their forms of blue and liquid air,
 Their little limbs of softest mould,
 Their azure plumage shower'd with gold :
 Each like his favourite flower array'd,
 And breathing fragrance from the bed.

DARK-frowning o'er the spreading quire
 Stands, Atlas like, their thundering Sire ;
 And, from his feat exulting, eyes
 The trackless waste of seas and skies.

In shades deep plunged; whose glimmering light
 Gives half his gloomy form to fight,
 Dim as his rolling eye-balls glare,
 He scatters whirlwinds through the air;
 Clouds his mighty limbs invest;
 And as he rears his dusky crest,
 His plumage glancing thro' the night,
 Quivers with pale and livid light!

THUS wildly whirls his devious wing,
 Till Phœbus wakes the joyous Spring;
 Then yielding to his strong controul,
 Muttering he seeks the frozen pole:
 But leaves his milder race, that steal
 O'er the smooth stream, or lilled vale.
 So, when with rage and fury blind,
 Strong Passion sways the dark'ned mind;
 Amid' its whirl, to madness wrought,
 Calm Peace subsides, and guiding Thought.
 But when the scattering shades decay,
 Broke by cool Reason's temperate ray;
 Slow as the night of Passion fails,
 A clear and placid dawn prevails:

Where

Where tempests tore the bursting sail,
 Now breathes alone the gentler gale,
 That tamed to Judgment's steady lore,
 Swells the full sheet; but points the shore.

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